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NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

October 24, 1939

Japan's Up Against It

by Philip J. Jaffe

That Specter Haunts Them

by A. B. Magil

A Boom in Death

by Robert Norton

Ganging Up on Neutrality

An Editorial

"Our Cultural Affinities"

by Samuel Sillen

CARTOONS BY GROPPER, GARDNER REA, REDFIELD, RICHTER

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Between Ourselves

WE don't know how to put it more clearly or more urgently than this.

We face financial suppression.

Last week we appealed to our readers to save the magazine. We needed $7,000, we said, to cover our immediate needs. We received a little over $700. One-tenth.

This spring, you recall, we ran a drive for $30,000. We got $23,000. That tided the magazine over the summer, paid the most pressing debts. But that additional $7,000 we asked —and didn't get—was the margin that would provide for all the accumulated debts to Jan. 1, 1940.

That difference threatens to break the magazine.

We must immediately have $7,000 or else the deficit will do what Congressman Dies wants done. It will suppress NEW MASSES more quickly, more certainly, than our enemies ever dreamed possible.

Last week the paper company threatened to hold up our next shipment of paper. We prevented that by calling the staff together and they voted to withhold pay in order to meet the bill. That makes four weeks the staff members have gone without pay. The personal problem of the editorial and business departments, however, is not the point. The point is—the paper supply, the printer, the engraver.

To date NEW MASSES has received $753 in response to our emergency appeal. Part of the $753 was three hundred one-dollar subscriptions from clear-eyed readers who told us: "NEW MASSES is a MUST in these critical days of imperialist war."

If ever there was a time when America needed NEW MASSES it is today.

If ever there was a time NEW MASSES needed immediate help it is today.

If response to this appeal is not greater next week than it has been to date, we cannot surely tell whether there will be an issue.

Dies is waiting for that moment.

Can you afford to let it happen?

(See Page 30)

THE EDITORS.

WE DON'T want to say too much about it at the moment but we urge NM readers to watch these columns for an announcement in an early issue of a series which you have been awaiting for a long time. We don't want to say who the writer is, but he is an old NM favorite. We don't want to say who his subject is, but you'll be happy to read what we know about him. That's all about that, this week. Watch these columns for the tipoff.

NM celebrates its twenty-eighth birthday with a new kind of Annual Ball. Saturday night, December 2, is the date and the place is the traditional one, modernized and streamlined—Webster Hall. The official title for the evening's festivities is "A Night in Trinidad." Music will be furnished by the Caribbean Serenaders (Calypso recorders from Trinidad) featuring the Duke of Iron, the Trinidad Troubadour, plus the Calypso Kid, who turns out to be none other than Bill Matons, assisted by the Calypso dancers. Dick Carroll and his ten-piece swing orchestra will provide continuous dance rhythms. Advance tickets may be ordered now either by mail or telephone. Phone your order to Jean Stanley, our NM affairs director, at CAledonia 5-3076. Tickets obtained in advance are $1; at the door, $1.50.

During the coming week NEW MASSES Forums will present the following speakers: Mike Gold, on "How to Stop Fascism," Friday, October 20, 8:30 p.m., at 40 East 7th St., NYC, under the auspices of IWO Lodge 736; James Dugan, on "Movies in Wartime," Sunday, October 22, 8:15 p.m., at Philadelphia's Town Hall, 150 North Broad St., under the auspices of the People's Forum of Philadelphia; and Mike Gold, on "The Writer Looks at a Changing World," Sunday, October 22, 8:30 p.m., at the IWO Community Center, 3200 Coney Island Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., under the auspices of the Sea Breeze Seminar.

Who's Who

PHILIP J. JAFFE is the managing editor of *Amerasia.* He has written other articles for NM on the Far East. . . . Major Allen Johnson was an officer of the Fifteenth International Brigade in the Spanish war. . . . Robert Norton is a Washington newspaperman. . . . Al Richmond is managing editor of the *People's World,* West Coast progressive daily. . . . Joseph Starobin, an expert on foreign affairs, is one of NM's regular contributors. . . . Henry Hart is the author of a novel, *The Great One.* . . . George Wilner, whose woodcut appears on Page 19, is a member of the American Artists Union of California.

Flashbacks

PRO-BRITISH, pro-war propagandists who are having difficulty in this country selling the idea that Chamberlain is out to save mankind, might ponder two anniversaries of the week: (1) a considerable hunk of the British empire joyfully ceased to be under any military domination of the British on Oct. 19, 1781. That day the American Revolutionary War ended with the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Va.; (2) Terence MacSwiney, Sinn Fein mayor of Cork, died Oct. 25, 1920, after a seventy-three-day hunger strike for the independence of Ireland. . . . Rank-and-filers in the American Labor Party may note with pride this week that they are carrying on a long tradition. New York's first labor party was launched as the Workingmen's Party, Oct. 19, 1829. The attention of the ALP and indeed of all progressives, is likewise called to October 20. On that day, in 1926, died one of America's greatest and best-loved labor leaders, Eugene V. Debs. . . . As more and more people realize what a defeat the German-Soviet pact was for Hitler, it is amusing to recall two Nazi anniversaries: On Oct. 21, 1933, Germany resigned from the League of Nations, and on Oct. 24, 1936, the Rome-Berlin axis was formed. . . . And for those Wall Streeters who get panicky at every rumor of peace we leave the following memo: This week marks the tenth anniversary of the great Wall Street panic of 1929. On October 22 the crash came, a dramatic evidence of the increasing instability of the capitalist system.

This Week

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIII OCTOBER 24, 1939 NUMBER 5

A Turning Point in History

The smashing of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis brings an upsurge to China. The role of America in Japan's war. Chaos in imperialist Europe: new civilization in China.

SOME time in the future when, freed of the passions of today, historians estimate the significance of September and October 1939, they will conclude that the destruction of the fascist axis in these months and the weakening of both imperialist groups by the action of the USSR marked a turning point in world history. The series of Soviet diplomatic moves that began with the non-aggression pact with Germany has transformed the entire international situation both in Europe and the Far East. Germany is more encircled than ever; irrespective of developments in Europe, her position has been weakened. Italy, forced by the exigencies of the world situation to remain neutral, is like a weak reed, ready to sway in whatever direction it is blown. But Japan perhaps has been hardest hit. She has been completely isolated, both economically and politically, from Europe. Unable to depend upon the British, French, or even the Dutch empire for her raw materials, Japan must now look to the United States for nearly all her essential war supplies. The European war has narrowed the markets for her exports, forcing her to turn increasingly to the Western Hemisphere in order to maintain her foreign trade.

The new power thus acquired by the United States is very disturbing to Japan. Compare her situation today with what it was in 1914: Twenty-five years ago Japan found it easy to take advantage of the World War, entering it on the side of the Allies and seizing Germany's possessions in the Far East as war booty. She was also able to enhance her economic interests in Asia and the South Sea areas at the expense of the Western powers. But today, while Japan could participate in the European war on the side of Germany—which would enable her more easily to eliminate British, French, and possibly American interests from China—she fears the possibility of the United States becoming a participant on the opposite side. This would not only cut off her most essential source of war supplies, but would presumably involve her in a disastrous war with this country. Nevertheless, Japanese industrialists are eager to take advantage of the European situation, which is a "natural" for the satisfaction of their trade ambitions. The fulfillment of their hopes, however, depends upon their ability to overcome many other obstacles — all resulting from Japan's inability to bring her war against China to a successful conclusion.

After more than two years of warfare, Japan is as far as ever from subjugating the Chinese people. By May 1939 the Japanese Army commanders realized that they were accomplishing little but fruitless destruction. Japan's inability to obtain sufficient manpower, supplies, munitions, and shipping facilities makes it virtually impossible to carry out large scale attacks with any marked degree of success. Even in the north of China, where she has made the most substantial advance, Japan has been unable to occupy the strategic province of Shansi, which could become, through Sian, the gateway to the entire Northwest. Every campaign in that province has been defeated by a combination of Eighth Route Army and other Chinese troops. The spread of political education among the Chinese people has increasingly nullified Japan's efforts

"General Yoshiwara was in charge of the emperor's army in North China."

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to exploit those areas which her army has actually occupied.

The Japanese Army has also met with reverses on the Manchurian-Mongolian frontier. In the summer of 1938 it was decisively defeated by Soviet troops at Changkufeng. Recently it suffered an even more serious defeat at Nomonhan on the Mongolian-Manchurian border. This latter defeat was admitted, surprisingly enough, by the Japanese War Office spokesman. The admission was presumably due to a desire, on the one hand, to justify the signing of a truce with the Soviet Union and, on the other, to force the extremists in the Japanese Army to lose face so that the "moderate" elements might have more leeway to adopt a conciliatory policy toward such powers as the United States and the USSR. Some commentators have concluded that the Soviet-Japanese truce will play into the hands of Japan, but events do not substantiate this analysis. During August, in the midst of conversations with Germany, the Soviet Union extended a $140,000,000 loan to China and has since shown increasing evidence that she intends to continue her support of Chinese resistance. The prestige of the reactionary militarists in Japan has been weakened by the results of the border warfare, and the Japanese people have been further disillusioned about their military leaders.

There are many signs that the Japanese people are losing faith in the "divine mission"

McGill

JAPANESE GAINS AND DEFEATS IN CHINA. *Three setbacks for Japan in the past year emphasize the costs and hazards of the invasion in China. At Mononhan (1) the Soviet troops administered a thrashing to the Japanese army this August just as they did a year ago at Changkufeng (2). At Changsha (3 on both maps) the Nippon militarists have just suffered a decisive defeat. Japan's slender hold in China is revealed in the enlargement of the northern war zone at the right by breaking down the areas in which Japanese armies operate according*

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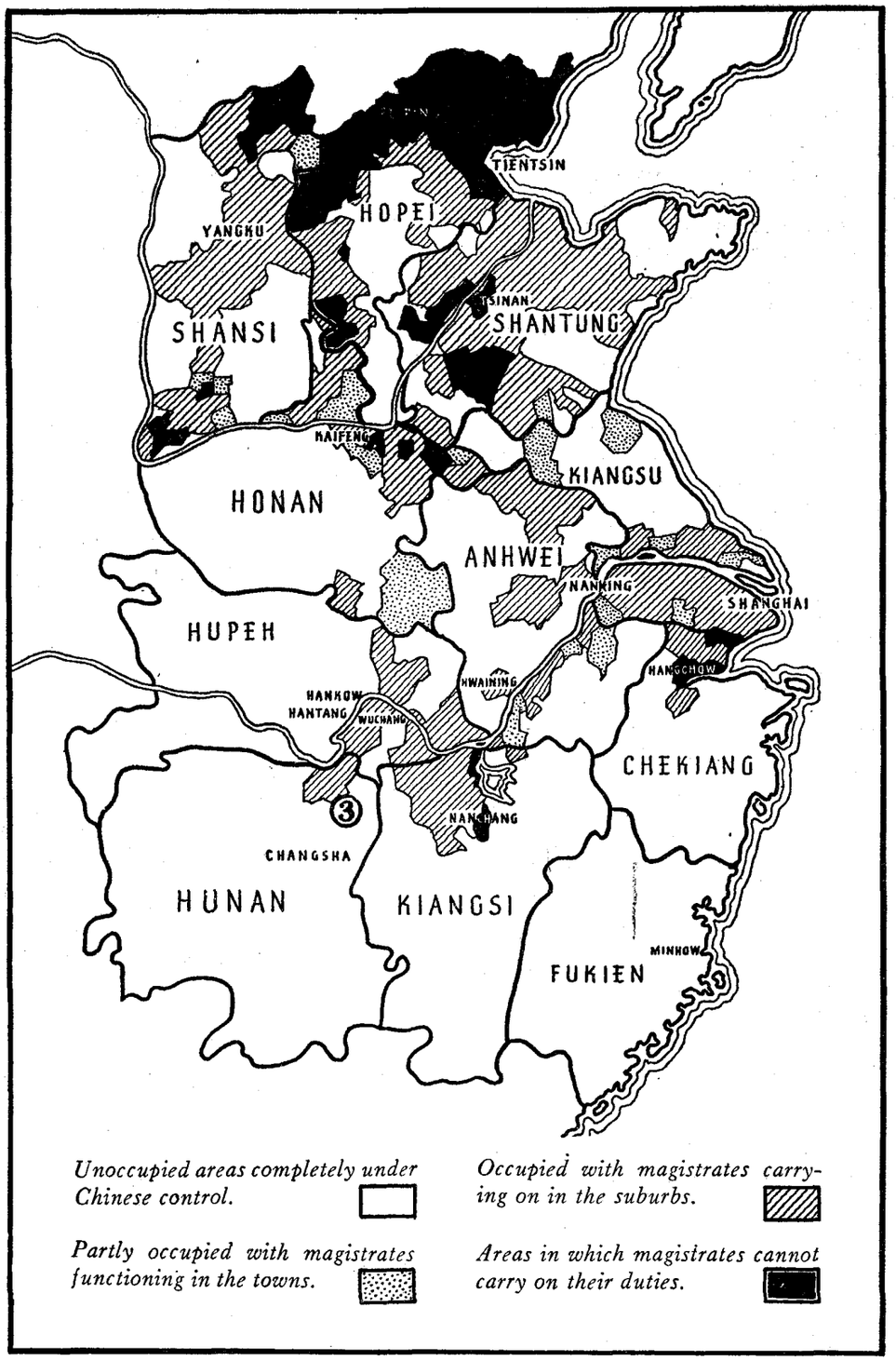
of their race. The rise in living costs, longer working hours, impaired health resulting from speedup in factories, and general lowering of their already low standard of living have caused Japanese workers to reconsider their traditional attitude toward their patriotic duty. Up to the middle of 1938 strong-arm methods rapidly lessened the number and intensity of strikes but the sudden, sharp rise in the cost of living has caused a large increase in labor troubles since January. Since April an average of fifty thousand workers have been involved in labor disputes, chiefly arising from demands for higher wages. Japanese officials are afraid that production in munitions plants, as well as in plants producing export commodities, will be crippled. The shortage of labor is not only endangering the food production in the country but is forcing Japanese women and children into industry, particularly into the mines. Nor do Japanese leaders dare to solve their problem by recalling troops from China. They are in deadly fear of what hundreds of thousands of dissatisfied soldiers would do upon their return to a country which they would find so changed for the worse.



McGill

to whether Chinese local governments continue their administrative duties. This map, based upon official Chinese figures as of April 15 last, is limited to the northern war zone and shows that out of 945 counties, 59 percent are under complete Chinese control. Only in seventy-two counties do Chinese magistrates find it impossible to discharge their duties.

Japan is suffering severely from the loss of foreign trade and the depletion of her gold reserves following her shift to a war economy. As a result, her chief fear today is the possibility of an American embargo on war materials. Not only would this seriously affect Japan's ability to produce sufficient munitions to continue her war of conquest; an embargo on such materials as scrap iron, steel, oil, copper, and machine tools would also thwart her designs on the export markets which she hopes to capture during the present European war.

But stronger than Japan's fear of the economic power of the United States or the political and military power of the Soviet Union is her fear of the new China which has arisen in the past two years. Japan's greatest dilemma today is whether to give up the conquest of China as a bad job and revive her export trade, or to renew her energy for another "final" effort at subjugating the Chinese people. Of all the alternatives facing Japan, the one to which she is perhaps least inclined is to continue singlehanded her war against China. Cooperation and compromise with the Western powers, with the ultimate purpose of partitioning China, on Japanese terms of course, would be much more desirable. The next stage of Japanese diplomacy is therefore likely to be one of conciliatory approaches to those powers.

CHINA FIGHTS ON

China today is a different nation not only from what she was twenty-five years ago but from what she was two years ago. In 1914 China was a weak and dying feudal state, ruled by selfish reactionaries and exploited by the vested interests of foreign powers. She was in no position to resist demands from any source. Her only security lay in the inability of all the powers concerned to agree on their respective shares of the spoils. Today China is a united nation prepared, virtually to a man, to fight to the end for her freedom and integrity. Even without any outside aid, the powerful upsurge of a new patriotic nationalism among the Chinese people is destined to thwart Japan's attempts at subjugation.

Few countries living through an extended period of crisis have shown as much unity and as few rifts as China. For a country which only yesterday contained so many selfish and autocratic militarists, the number of important traitors has been extremely small. Chief among them is ex-Premier Wang Ching-wei and though he is not unimportant as a tool in the hands of Japan the Chinese people have lost all regard for him and, following his expulsion from the Kuomintang last December, his old-time prestige has completely disappeared. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's prestige, on the other hand, has never been greater than it is today.

Fortunately for China, she is not dependent

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for her existence upon export trade and therefore upon foreign exchange. It matters little to her what happens to the Chinese national dollar in the world market. Such matters are much more the concern of countries like Great Britain, the United States, and even Japan. China's only problem, economically speaking, is to organize her productive capacities so that she is able to feed, clothe, and shelter her civil and military population. From a military point of view, she suffers chiefly from a lack of heavy munitions. Though able to manufacture sufficient quantities of hand grenades, simple rifles, and even light machine guns, she cannot produce artillery, tanks, or airplanes. For these she is dependent entirely upon outside aid. Even without such aid she can resist until Japan is worn out. With such aid she would be able to undertake the third and offensive stage of her military strategy and thus shorten a war of horribly destructive proportions.

Even with the very limited help which China has obtained thus far, she has been able to enter, partially at least, upon the offensive stage. This is best illustrated by the recent attempts of Japan to launch a large scale attack against South-Central China in the provinces of Hunan and Kiangsi. The Japanese retreat from their effort to capture Changsha is not only an indication of China's increasing strength from a military point of view; it is significant politically, as it will weaken the claims for support of the proposed new puppet setup under Wang Ching-wei. Japan's belated realization that it is impossible to subjugate China easily and rapidly is beginning to influence her approach to foreign powers—particularly the United States and the USSR. Her plan to set up Wang Ching-wei as the puppet head of what Japan will call "New China" is undoubtedly part of an effort to delude the United States into believing that the war is over, that China is willing to consider peace terms, and that the United States may as well recognize the "new order" in Eastern Asia. The United States must not fall for such obviously dishonest tactics.

AMERICA'S OPPORTUNITY

Traditionally the United States has been primarily concerned with the development of trade with China, rather than with the building up of vested interests. In this our aims differ to a certain extent not only from those of Japan but from those of Great Britain and France. This difference is perhaps the reason why the Chinese people have regarded us as their best friends and most likely allies in their efforts to develop a stable, progressive economy. Until very recently, America held first place in China's trade but the American trader's dream of a prosperous and stable China, providing an ever-expanding market for American goods, was shattered in July 1937 when Japan launched her drive to block China's rapid strides toward economic and political maturity. Japan's plans for China do not include any room for American enterprise.

In view of America's hopes, however, her policy in the Far East for the past two years has been ambiguous to say the least. While public and official sentiment has definitely favored China, we have continued to supply Japan with more than 50 percent of her required strategic raw materials. Our official aid to China has been confined to a single $25,000,000 credit and the extension of the Chinese-American monetary agreement permitting China to dispose of her silver in exchange for American dollars. Incidentally, some of the silver brought to the United States comes from Japanese-occupied areas and therefore serves as a direct aid to Japan rather than to China. Even the public response of the American people has not been in accord with their sympathies in the Sino-Japanese war: in over two years of warfare the total amount of Chinese relief funds, including the Red Cross contribution, does not exceed $1,500,000—a pitifully small sum when compared, for example, to the $15,000,000 raised for Japanese relief following the 1923 earthquake.

AID TO JAPAN

In contrast to our meager aid to China, the United States has continued to furnish the bulk of Japan's essential war supplies. With the aid of American scrap iron, steel, oil, machinery, and trucks, Japan has been able to conduct a campaign which has involved the destruction of American lives and property, the enforcement of currency and exchange restrictions, and the organization of state-controlled industrial enterprises which seriously injure American business and trading interests. American missionary and educational property has been destroyed or appropriated. An American gunboat was sunk by Japanese planes. All in all, Japan has been able to prevent Americans from living and trading peacefully in China.

The main factor which has prevented the United States from carrying out a policy more in accord with American interests and public sympathy has been the belief that any action to check Japan would be ineffective unless taken in conjunction with other powers. This argument is no longer valid, inasmuch as recent world events have placed the United States in a controlling position in relation to the Far East. It is clear that we now possess the power to cripple Japan's war machine and that Japan is too isolated and weak even to contemplate an attack upon the United States in retaliation. Realizing that the Japanese Army cannot win in China without American help, Japan will make every effort, with her new "moderate Cabinet," to placate our State Department. Premier Abe and his colleagues will undoubtedly use every pretext to convince the United States that Japan's "new order" in Asia will be good for American interests, and will save the Chinese people from a variety of concocted bugaboos.

A REAL NEW ORDER IN ASIA

Unlike discussions of America's relations to the European situation, which chiefly concern the best way of staying out of it, discussions of our Far Eastern policy generally center around the methods which will most effectively promote our traditional aims and interests in that area. The United States is in a position not only to increase her own political and economic interests in China but, even more important, to assist in the development of a genuine new order in Asia which will provide the peace and stability so essential to the continued prosperity of America. A first step in this direction will have been made if the abrogation of the 1911 commercial treaty with Japan is followed, next January, by an official embargo on war supplies. Japan's efforts to fool the American people by the establishment of puppet governments, even under the leadership of such well known men as Wang Ching-wei, must not be taken seriously. It is not in the American tradition to support traitors, especially when they are working against our own interests.

At the present writing, Europe seems on the verge of a life and death struggle between imperialist powers, from which every American instinctively recoils. The battle on the neutrality question is an expression of this desire to keep out of the impending catastrophe. This desire must not be allowed to confuse the Far Eastern issue, for while Europe presents a picture of imminent chaos, the Far East opens a vista for a better and more progressive civilization. The United States today has the opportunity to lend her weight and prestige to the support of the nation that is fighting to make that civilization a reality.

PHILIP J. JAFFE.

America Continues to Arm Japan

(United States Share of 1938 World Exports to Japan Essential for War Purposes in US Dollars)

	World	*United States*	*Percent*
Total	$206,393,950	$171,574,167	56.00
Petroleum and products	81,034,885	53,145,672	65.57
Metal-working machinery	36,448,527	24,454,707	67.09
Scrap or old iron and steel	24,407,089	22,061,212	90.39
Copper	24,385,546	22,163,779	90.89
Aircraft and parts	22,692,655	17,454,477	76.92
Other iron and steel supplies	20,973,343	11,251,804	53.65
Automobiles, parts and accessories	18,635,299	12,050,536	64.67

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WAR BULLETIN: NUMBER SIX

Whose Sea Supremacy?

Will Germany's new submarine campaign paralyze the British fleet? The prospects for an attack on the Westwall. Problems of convoys.

THIS writer has previously discussed the question of the vulnerability of battleships to air attack. Recent developments have done nothing to change this condition but meanwhile other factors have entered into sea warfare that once again raise the question of Britain's sea supremacy. On land, under modern war conditions, the increasing strength of fire power has tended to cause a greater dispersion of troops in deployment; this has been aggravated by the possibility of air attack against close concentrations. Thus the ever recurring desire of commanding staffs to concentrate forces for an overwhelming blow is counteracted by the ever increasing need for security from the air weapon.

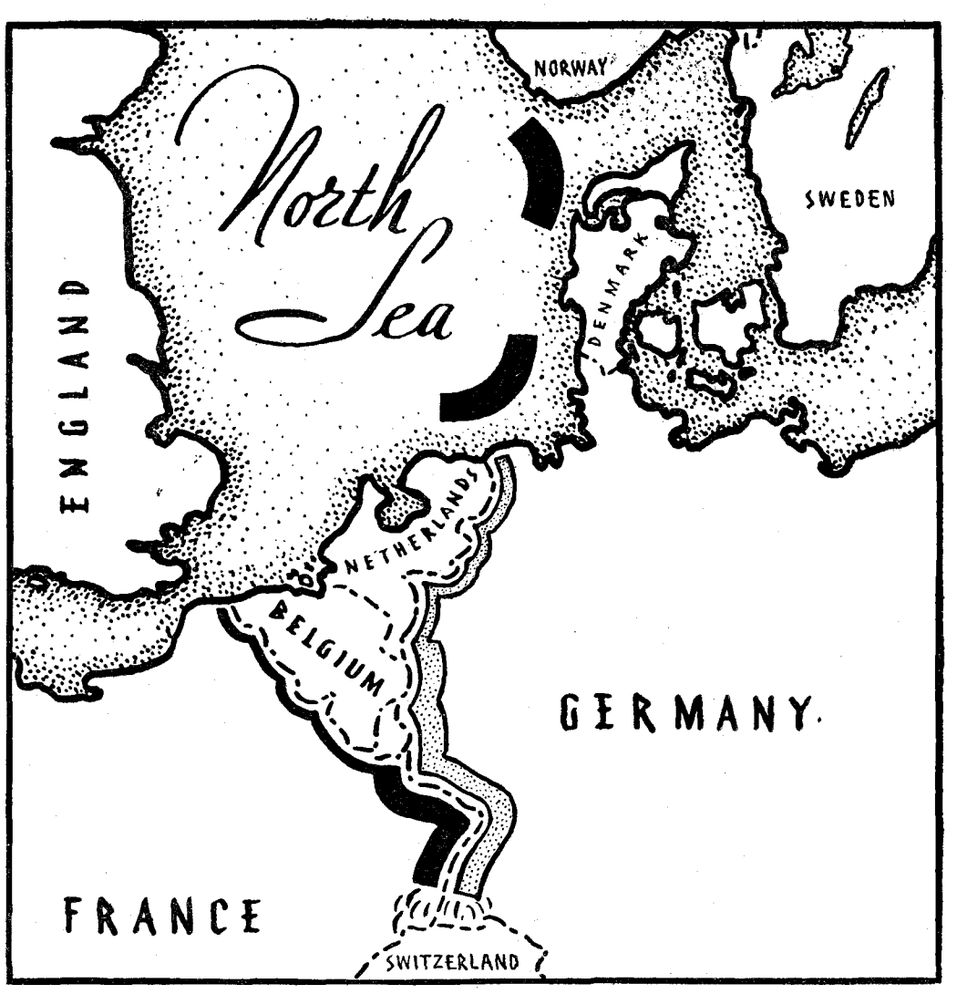
At sea a similar development has become obvious. Battleships and their heavy offensive armament have been the backbone of the great naval forces of modern times; indeed they were the backbone of medieval naval forces also. The Spanish Armada counted upon its heavy galleons with their great guns to destroy the British fleet and permit the landing of a great expeditionary force on British soil; Drake ruined these dreams with his small but easily maneuvered vessels and at one blow wiped Spanish naval supremacy from the seas. The British and the other great nations, however, have themselves moved in the same direction as the Spaniards of Elizabeth's period: they have gone in for great dreadnaughts with mighty weapons, protected by their armoring and "bulges" from all types of attack. The Battle of Jutland (World War) indicated a number of serious defects in vessels of this type and the type and weight of armoring was improved and increased. But warnings were issued that these great behemoths of the sea were not necessarily invulnerable. As a result all naval tactics undertook to increase the screens of destroyers and light craft behind which the battleships were to operate. Thus the tendency developed toward concentration of forces at sea.

Meanwhile the first experiences of the present war showed that Britain would have to convoy not only her own merchant vessels but possibly those of neutrals with whom she was to do business for raw materials and food. The convoy ships selected were cruisers, destroyers, and light craft; their speed and mobility made them the ideal craft for this purpose. But just as soon as these vessels began to be employed for such purposes their number for screening the great warships of the battle fleet was diminished.

At sea all vessels are open to a three-dimensional attack: from the surface, from beneath the surface, and from the air. It is true that so far aerial attack has not proved itself effective; the British refuse to admit damage by aircraft to the fleet, but it is elementary that the result of such sustained attacks will be to disperse more widely the fleet in line. The strategy of naval warfare will be considerably limited by the consistent attacks of bombers. When this type of attack is coordinated with submarine warfare of a new type grave doubts are raised as to whether battleships can ever freely function in their own element; they will in all probability have to be tied up in their bases and protected by booms and anti-aircraft. Their value will have been seriously reduced. On the other hand if they are used on the seaways it will be necessary to escort them with a multitude of smaller protective craft; this will necessitate the lessening of convoys and will again open the merchant shipping lanes to full-fledged submarine attack. Is it possible that the developments in submarine technique have something new to demonstrate? The present discussions anent the new torpedo which leaves no wake and which is very much more powerful than previous types would indicate that this is a possibility. No doubt new devices will be invented to offset these advantages, but will the time factor prove so important as to topple Britain as ruler of the waves?

Serious damage to the British and French fleets and the breaking of the blockade by the German submarine-aircraft strategy may compel the British-French entente to undertake that which they have no desire for—an attack against the Westwall. They have so far refused the German peace terms and in doing so have been counting upon the strategic support of the United States. Hitler has threatened a war of destruction. Is his air-submarine campaign now being developed to break British naval supremacy?

MAJOR ALLEN JOHNSON.



RULE, BRITANNIA? *Can Nazi submarine and air warfare make the North Sea blockade so costly that Britain will be forced to attack the Westwall by land?*

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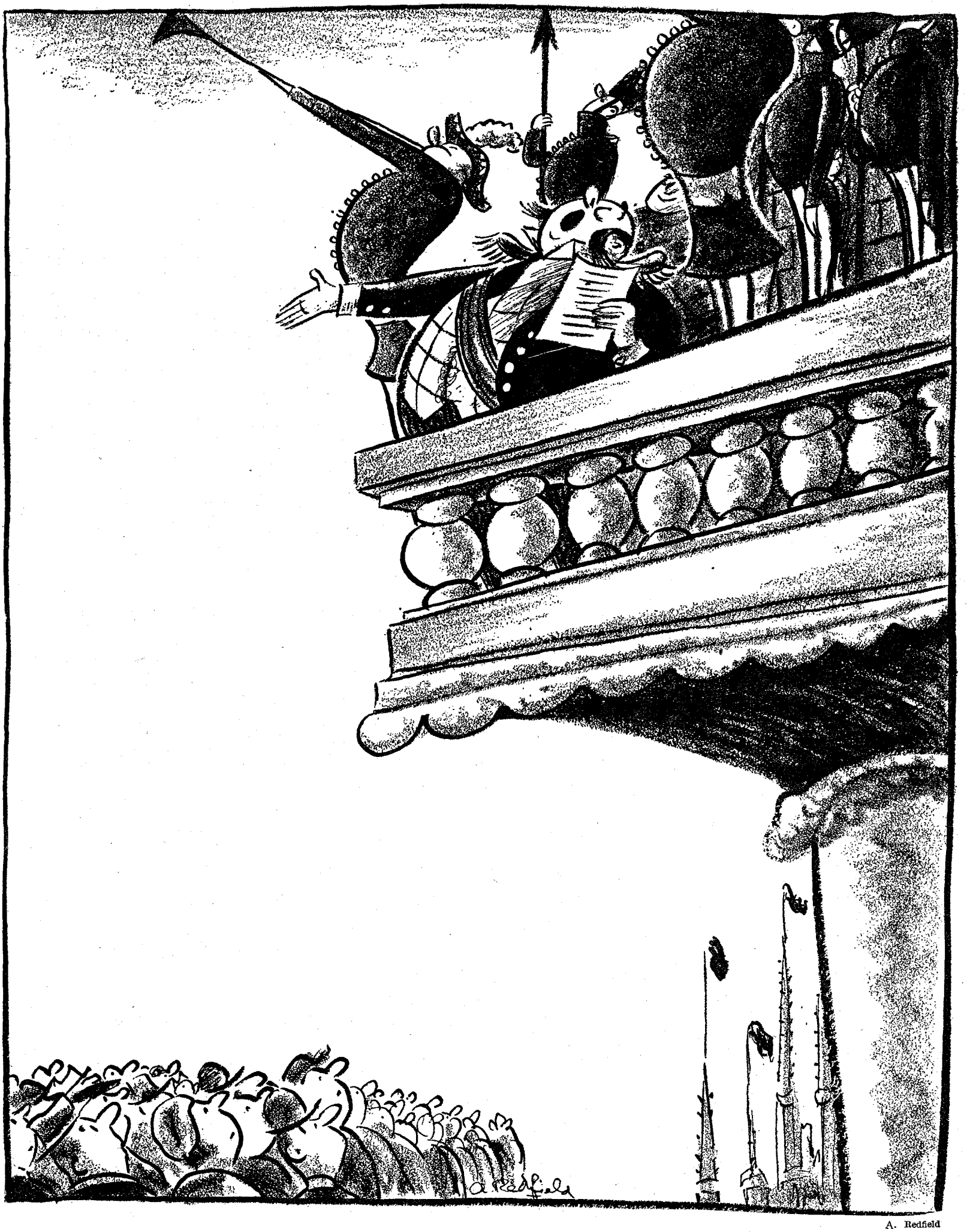

A. Redfield

"His Imperial Majesty, George VI, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Sea, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, proclaims to all his loyal subjects, upon whom the sun never sets, that this is NOT an imperialist war."

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That Specter Haunts Them

The men at the controls of war tip their hand. Lippmann, Thompson, and Lindbergh bespeak the mind of capitalism. That growing anti-socialist lineup. Marx talked about it in 1848.

A SPECTER is haunting those who sit at the controls of our society. No filigree phantom is this, no hobgoblin conjured out of cobwebs, but a very material shape. If you want to know what the men at the controls are thinking, look into the minds of their closest retainers. Look, for example, into the mind of Walter Lippmann. Here is the microcosm of a class. The specter haunting the mind of Lippmann is the same that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels found haunting Europe in 1848.

On October 12 the New York *Herald Tribune* published a Lippmann column entitled "The Paramount Issue of the War." The American Chamberlain press and radio have been dinning into the ears of the public that this is a war to end Hitlerism, a war in which democracy is fighting to halt fascist aggression and liberate its victims. Lippmann too has helped perpetrate this myth. But in his October 12 column he drops all pretense and blurts out what Chamberlain, Daladier, and their Wall Street confreres do not yet dare to say. With exceptional clarity Lippmann confirms the NEW MASSES estimate of the war and puts to rout all those fumbling liberals who have been so ready to swallow the Chamberlain apologetics.

It is worth noting that Lippmann's analysis of the problem is characteristic of the general shift in the attitude of the American press toward the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. After weeks of attempting to persuade their readers that the USSR had formed an alliance with Nazi Germany, the newspapers are now beginning to attack the Soviet Union because it has administered a serious defeat to its supposed "ally," as well as to Anglo-French imperialism, and has greatly strengthened its own position.

> The question is not what are to be the boundaries of Germany or of Poland or of Czechoslovakia [writes Lippmann]. The question is what shall be the boundary of Europe against the expanding invasion of Russian imperial Bolshevism; the supreme issue of the war is whether Germany is to return to the society of Western nations as a defender of the West or whether revolutionary Nazism is to break down all the remaining defenses of Western Europe.

Read these words carefully. Study them. They embody not only a *Weltanschauung,* but a program of action. Nazi Germany, which only yesterday was denounced as the enemy of civilization and culture, is here chastised because *it has ceased to be the enemy of the Soviet Union.* And the supreme object of the war is declared to be *to compel Germany to become once more the triggerman of imperialist Europe against the USSR.*

Walter Lippmann is undoubtedly one of the most sensitive and most class-conscious of the intellectual camp-followers of big business. His is a seismographic gift, recording and elaborating even the faintest tremors that agitate the bourgeois mind. Behind the decorous broadcloth of his prose is a brain as coldly realistic as that of Tom Girdler. His ideas have, therefore, more than a personal identity. However priestly the manner, they are the ideas of the class whose house of worship is the stock exchange. Lippmann says:

> The fundamental question is whether the Nazis, who have knocked down the barrier against Bolshevism, could, even if they wanted to do it, disentangle themselves from the Russian partnership and reconstitute an effective resistance to the Russian advance. This question goes deeper than whether Hitler's word can be trusted, deeper even than the question of whether Hitler has renounced or could renounce further aggression. The question is whether the Nazi regime can ever again restore a barrier against the Bolshevik invasion in the European borderland.

Lippmann answers this question in the negative. It is, in fact, *the unwillingness or inability of the Nazi regime to make war on the USSR that has made it necessary for Chamberlain to make war on Nazi Germany.* Is the object of this war to liberate Poland and Czechoslovakia, as Chamberlain and his American apologists claim? Again Lippmann answers in the negative:

> If, on the other hand, Hitler actually withdrew [from Poland and Czechoslovakia]—something as yet unimaginable—he would leave these nations prostrated and dismembered. Their governing classes are in exile or are nervously broken or are dead; their economy is shattered and their social organization is disrupted. In withdrawing now Hitler would leave behind him a chaos of seething misery into which revolutionary Bolshevism would advance with little resistance.
>
> What has been destroyed cannot quickly be rebuilt. The fact is that although Poland and Czechoslovakia must be reconstituted *in the interest of Germany and of Europe,* in the face of the Russian development, they cannot now be reconstituted *except under German protection.* [My italics—A. B. M.]

Thus Lippmann dumps out of the window all the Chamberlain bilge about "poor Poland" and "poor Czechoslovakia" (it was "poor Belgium" twenty-five years ago). These states must under no circumstances be liberated because then the people—"revolutionary Bolshevism"—and not the capitalists and landowners, who are "in exile or are nervously broken or are dead," might take control.

But if Poland and Czechoslovakia are to remain vassals of German fascism, then why the war against Germany? Because, Lippmann tells us, "Nazism is incapable of providing this German protection to the borderland peoples of central Europe"—which is a polite way of saying that the present Nazi government is incapable of playing the aggressive anti-Soviet role for which it had been cast by Chamberlain and Daladier. "There can be no safety for Germany or for Europe," Lippmann continues, "except through a Germany capable of becoming the protector of the European borderland." What is this Germany? Certainly, not democratic Germany, which from behind prison bars and the gag of censorship fought the anti-Soviet course of the Hitler regime. Lippmann and the class for whom he speaks fear the triumph of democratic Germany, which they call "revolutionary Bolshevism." That explains Chamberlain's and Daladier's reluctance to wage effective warfare. Lippmann points out that the Allies must make clear to Germany that if the war continues, Germany and "Europe"—that is, German, British, and French imperialism—stand to be defeated even more disastrously than they "have been defeated by the disastrous victory in Poland." In other words, there is the danger of the overthrow of imperialism in all these countries and of the establishment of socialist democracy. And he urges:

> . . . direct private approaches to the German Army and to all that is genuinely conservative inside of Germany. If they [the Allies] convince the Germans that a Western offensive cannot be decisive and that the creation of a strong conservative Germany is their only real war aim, they may yet save the world from great danger and incalculable misery.

Lippmann's candor helps clear the air, though it may not be entirely appreciated in the ruling circles of Britain and France which still keep up the pretense of fighting a war for democracy. Lippmann's column provides an insight into the calculations of those American big business forces that are clamoring for scrapping the arms embargo in order to place this country's economic resources (and ultimately its manpower) on the side of Anglo-French imperialism. Lippmann, himself an opponent of the arms embargo, has already made clear that the real intent is a world crusade against Communism. But on the other side of the embargo issue there are also reactionary big business interests who, despite their differences on this question, agree with Chamberlain's and Lippmann's larger program. Lippmann speaks of "the advance of another Genghis Khan"; Hearst, defender of the arms embargo, calls it "Asiatic Communism." Lippmann urges a united front "against the expanding invasion of Russian imperial Bolshevism"; Hearst's *Journal and American* (October 13) writes: "It is suicidal folly for the European nations to make devastating war on each other

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and let Stalin build his Communistic empire on their ruins." Hearst also says: "The Soviets have sent no soldiers into America, and yet Moscow menaces America as much as London or Paris." (New York *Daily Mirror,* October 13.)

Others have taken up the Lippmann thesis. The day after his column appeared, the New York *Times,* one of the leaders in the campaign against the arms embargo, declared editorially:

> In view of the swift march of imperial Bolshevism [Lippmann's own phrase.—A. B. M.], sweeping down on Europe from the East, there must be many Germans, in the army and elsewhere, who see the future clearly as a choice between a continuation of the war, culminating in a revolution of the left, or an early peace, to be achieved through an amalgamation of the forces that are opposed both to war and Communism.

On the same day William Allen White, who sometimes passes as a liberal, made this reactionary anti-Soviet thesis part of the argument for repeal of the arms embargo. Speaking as chairman of the Non-Partisan Committee for Peace through Revision of the Neutrality Law, White declared that the Soviet action in defending peace in the Baltic through mutual assistance pacts with the small Baltic states "makes it necessary, it seems to me, to get rid of our present neutrality law" (New York *Herald Tribune,* October 14). He made it clear that he wanted this country to be in a position to sell arms to the Scandinavian countries — which are under the thumb of British and German imperialism—in case of "any serious military or economic difference with Russia."

Dorothy Thompson, taking her cue from Lippmann, has also leaped into the fray. This journalistic Amazon writes *(Herald Tribune,* October 13) that the same thing restrains the British and French governments from waging vigorous war against Germany that prevented a pact with the Soviet Union.

> Every military consideration favored acceptance of the Russian terms by the Allies. But more than military considerations are at stake. For the object of this war is not to destroy Germany—which, with the aid of Russia, might not have been difficult—but to save Germany for Western civilization against her own leadership.

At last that sacred phrase, "Western civilization"—the "spiritual" cellophane around the anti-Soviet, anti-democratic complot. With the aid of the USSR, Miss Thompson admits, German fascism could have been destroyed. But the object of the war is to save German fascism for the world imperialist front. A front against whom? Further on Miss Thompson says significantly that this is not an imperialist war, but "the great European civil war." Some light is cast on the meaning of this when she writes: "In 1939, with complete consequentiality, Germany opened Europe to Asia [the Soviet-German pact—A. B. M.]. This war is a civil war to force Germany back into Western civilization . . ."

And what is Western civilization? "It is the synthesis of three things: the Christian ethic; the scientific spirit; and the rule of law."

> This trinity of concepts is unique to the West. Russia, Asia, and Africa have never produced a society which is a synthesis of the Christian ethic, free science, and the rule of law. The Mohammedan world does not know it. China, Japan, and India do not know it. . . .
>
> The synthesis is the unique contribution of Europe, and only those areas of the earth settled, colonized, ruled, and lived in by Europeans or the children of Europeans—the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa—belong to Western civilization. . . . It is the world's greatest and most creative civilization, although it has not the most numerous population by any means. . . . It is the only thing worth fighting for, worth dying for.

Miss Thompson has in the past written eloquent denunciations of the Hitler doctrine of racism. She has now paid him the tribute of imitation. "North America," wrote Hitler in the eleventh chapter of *Mein Kampf,* "with a population composed overwhelmingly of Germanic elements—which mingle very little with inferior, colored races—shows a higher humanity and culture than does Central and South America, where the Latin settlers had mixed with the aborigines." The only difference between Hitler's statement and Dorothy Thompson's is that while he reserves racial superiority exclusively for Germanic elements, she has generously broadened the concept to include as superior "Aryans" all the Western European peoples and the countries they have colonized. And just as Hitler has used racism to camouflage and justify the drive of German imperialism against the independence of small capitalist states and against the imperialist interests of the large ones, so Dorothy Thompson puts forth her racist theory to camouflage and justify the proposed drive of European and American imperialism against the Soviet Union and the oppressed peoples of Asia and Africa. She does not yet add what Father Coughlin will add for her: that since the Jews also do not subscribe to "the Christian ethic," they too should be cast out of the imperialist heaven of "Western civilization" into the nether-world of the inferior peoples.

And Col. Charles Lindbergh, Hitler medalist, whom Dorothy Thompson only a couple of weeks ago sharply attacked for his Nazi sympathies, spoke in her spirit when he said over the radio the other night:

> Our bond with Europe is a bond of race and not of political ideology. . . . It is the European race we must preserve; political progress will follow. Racial strength is vital—politics a luxury. If the white race is seriously threatened, it may then be time for us to take our part in its protection, to fight side by side with the English, French, and Germans [note the omission of Russians—A. B. M.], but not with one against the other for our mutual destruction.

So much for what reaction is thinking and planning in regard to the imperialist war and the Soviet Union. But what about those liberals who unwittingly—or, to be more accurate, witlessly—echo the same ideas? Lippmann speaks of "imperial Bolshevism," the *New Republic* of "Communist imperialism." Dorothy Thompson adumbrates a holy crusade in behalf of "Western civilization"—and Samuel Grafton in the New York *Post* of October 9, envisioning new Soviet advances at the expense of both imperialist groups, writes: "It is a direct blow at our system of moral values." (The moral values of a Chamberlain or a Bonnet?)

And all because the Soviet Union has stopped Hitler—and Anglo-French imperialism—in the East, has saved eleven million Western Ukrainians, Western Byelo Russians, and Jews from falling into Hitler's hands, and has signed mutual assistance pacts with the Baltic states which for the first time make it possible for them to defend their independence free of German or British domination.

Eighteen years after the defeat of the first imperialist intervention and civil war against the USSR, a second imperialist intervention and civil war is being projected. The present European war is a last-minute dress rehearsal made necessary because one of the actors missed his cue. But why should liberals help the directors of this sinister mummery? The war against the Soviet Union—if it comes—will not be directed exclusively against the USSR. It will be a war against democracy everywhere —Daladier has, in fact, already launched the attack on French democracy by outlawing the Communist Party. Such remaining liberties and cultural values as have flourished under capitalist democracy will be sacrificed to the defense of "Western civilization"—in collaboration with a more submissive German fascism. The Lippmann and Thompson columns are a portent. The American people have no desire to be dragged into a war to make the world safe for imperialism and reaction. We want no blackout of democracy. Let us be on guard.

A. B. MAGIL.

A Senator Heiled

DESPITE widespread protest against his participation in the Nazi-run "German day" in Philadelphia on October 6, Sen. James J. Davis of Pennsylvania, Republican stalwart, came to the festival and made the main speech of the evening.

Nazis attempted to tone down the character of their meeting. The German consul was asked to withdraw his sponsorship. An effort was made to support Hitler's foreign policy in the name of Americanism. Nevertheless, advertisements of the "festival," as well as the senator's speech appeared in the *Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter.* Frequently during the meeting, a band of thirty stormtroopers were unable to suppress their "heils" for the senator's remarks. Congressmen James P. McGranery and Fred C. Gartner (known to the Bund as Fritz Gartner) were also present, and were greeted with the customary Nazi salute.

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CIO Stands for Labor

The convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations reflects the American workingman's will to remain at peace. A year's strength.

San Francisco.

THE most striking feature of the CIO convention was its unanimity. Every decision on resolutions and elective personnel was unanimous. This of course disappointed those sections of the press table and gallery that were itching for a let's-you-and-him fight. In fact, one of the disappointed spread the story that on the fourth and final day a "No" was heard in the rear of the hall when some resolution was introduced. However, when the lone dissident was located, it was discovered that what he had really said was, "No—I haven't got a match."

Despite some gentlemen at the press table, it was not a unity in cynicism that prevailed at the convention. It was a unity in principle. It was not a unity stillborn on the convention floor; it had its inception in the travails of the CIO movement over the past year. Perhaps it can be symbolized in the fact that there was no Homer Martin there to present John L. Lewis with a gold watch as a token of harmony and esteem, as there was in Pittsburgh a year ago.

The convention met after a year in which bitter and, at times, bloody conflicts were waged in two major CIO unions, the National Maritime Union and the United Automobile Workers. The truth is that the workers who decided the outcome of those conflicts also determined, in large measure, the nature of the unity at the convention. It was the seamen who braved the baseball-bat goons on New York's West Street and the gun-toting killers in the Gulf; it was the automobile workers who defeated the combined forces of Martin, Henry Ford, Jay Lovestone, and Father Coughlin.

The workers in the CIO had advanced from the more primitive forms of direct conflict with the employers to the more complex struggles against the employers' agents in their own ranks. In the two major tests of the year they had rejected the Red-baiters and splitters and, despite the owl-like hoots of Ben Stolberg, consolidated their organizations on the basis of militant unity. Because of these considerations, and despite the hue and cry in the press, there was not even a semblance of Red-baiting at the convention.

It is, of course, difficult to conceive what would have happened had Homer Martin and Henry Ford, Jerry King and the International Mercantile Marine won in the automobile workers' and seamen's unions. Yet, such speculation has its temptations; it opens up the sad vistas of what might have been in contrast to what really was, and thus the nebulous negative serves to throw into bolder relief the positive reality.

It is this background that gives substance to the unity fashioned at the CIO convention, and the key of understanding to the program that was adopted. The essence of that program was briefly as follows: (1) the stand on war; (2) on civil liberties; (3) on the economic outlook.

THE STAND ON WAR

The first premise of the CIO's policy toward the war was formulated in the report submitted by President Lewis: "Organized labor is emphatically opposed to any involvement of the United States in the European war." The war guilt was placed equally upon "arrogant aggression and inept statesmanship." Nowhere was there hinted an inclination to take even "moral" sides in the European conflict. In Lewis' original report, nothing at all was said about the neutrality debate in Congress. However, in the course of discussion there was an elaboration of the first statement which finally included the Neutrality Act issue. The evolution of the position on war and neutrality provides an interesting study.

On Tuesday, the convention's first day, Lewis, in elaborating on his report, reiterated the "firm and unalterable conviction that our nation is not called upon to participate in any manner on one side or the other of a European conflict." From that he proceeded to his first comment on the neutrality issue:

> The issue of the form of neutrality to be followed by the United States government during the period of the European war, which is now being debated in the Congress of the United States, will not be the deciding or controlling factor in the issue as between peace and war. The wording of the Neutrality Act, the classification of commodities and lethal weapons and the question of credit or non-credit to purchasers are questions which, compared to the issue of peace or war, are of secondary importance. . . . It is futile and absurd for the Congress of the United States and the population of the entire country to become confused and convulsed in a discussion of the varying definitions of actual or assumed neutrality which emanate from the minds and pens of statesmen of high and low degree. . . .

Having thus branded the discussion on neutrality as futile, in relation to the cardinal issue of war or peace, Lewis concluded that President Roosevelt's program should be supported "and caviling should cease." The final formulation, as adopted in convention resolution, also contained a very conditional support of the President's neutrality stand, again indicating that in the CIO's opinion the particular form of the Neutrality Act was not the decisive consideration. That resolution said:

> The CIO offers its support to President Roosevelt's policy based upon the cardinal principle of keeping America out of war and calls for further legislation to take the profits out of war business by rigorous taxation of excess profits and surplus incomes.

A final comment on the present war can be made in Lewis' words: "The rich and privileged profit hugely in a war, while labor suffers and its young men are killed."

CIVIL LIBERTIES

The most significant comment on civil liberties was contained in a resolution on criminal syndicalism and anti-alien legislation, passed unanimously, which said: "The civil liberties of the American people are indivisible and a threat to one group is a menace to all." While in the particular resolution that statement was applied to anti-alien legislation, the general discussion and the summary remarks of Lewis revealed a realization of the broader implications of such a position.

The defense of civil liberties was amplified

The Other Convention

A LOT of orations were delivered and some destructive work was done at the American Federation of Labor's fifty-ninth convention, in Cincinnati last week. A casual look at the record makes it appear to be just another in the long list of frustrations the AFL leadership has foisted upon its members. But it was more than that. For the first time since that stormy session of 1935 in 'Frisco, the last attended by John L. Lewis, the progressive sentiment of the federation's rank and file thrust up through the tough crust steamrollered down by Bill Green and made itself heard. The Executive Council's machine was still strong enough to get through a warmongering program, maligning the Soviet Union, but the delegates showed their true feelings when they almost blasted the roof off in approval of Mayor LaGuardia's denunciation of the current war. President Tobin of the teamsters, speaking for the membership back home, warned the diehards against too stiff an opposition to CIO-AFL unity. But the council's only decisive and unequivocal action was the tipoff for the rank and file: it kicked out the International Typographical Union's 79,000 members for refusing to pay its assessment into the anti-CIO war-chest. The charter of close to five thousand foundry workers was lifted because the union refused to amalgamate with the molders' union. Forty-two thousand members of the brewery union face suspension in a jurisdictional fight with the teamsters. The monolithic character of the CIO was marked by contrast with the squabbles in the AFL and hundreds of thousands of members back home have that in mind when their delegates return.

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in the great ovation accorded a resolution protesting efforts to deport Harold Pritchett, president of the International Woodworkers of America, and Harry Bridges, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, as well as one requesting citizenship status for Filipinos.

A further awareness of the menace to civil liberties under existing conditions was indicated in the fifth point of the five-point program on war contained in Lewis' report. That point was: "More than usual vigilance must be exercised to guard existing labor and social legislation and democratic rights against curtailment under the pretext of emergency considerations."

Had the convention met under normal circumstances, Lewis' report on economic trends and the major economic problems facing the country would have received the prominence that its brilliance and astuteness deserved. Lewis expressed "deep concern that we must report no advance of significance toward the fulfillment" of the economic program sketched in broad outline at the previous CIO convention. This program consisted of seven points:

1. The most important factor is "the increased economic activity of the workers to raise wages and shorten hours." However, in past years the workers have been on the defensive and required all their strength to maintain present levels, without being able to take the offensive for general improvements.

2. An increased proportion of the national income should go to active consumers. However, the trend has been in the other direction. "From May 1938 to May of this year," Lewis reported, "the index of industrial production rose seventeen points while the index of income given to all employees increased during the same period only from 79.5 to 82.9, that is, less than four points." Another danger signal noted was that less money was expended for WPA and PWA, while more money was appropriated for armaments, where a much smaller percentage of the federal dollars goes to consumers.

3. Provisions must be made so that the beneficial effects of wage increases or decreased hours will not be offset by the too rapid displacement of men by machines. Lewis noted no advances in this respect; on the contrary, the situation has grown more critical. He cited figures to prove that contention and summarized with a statement from a recent WPA report on production, employment, and productivity, which said: "There is every indication that output per man-hour in manufacturing industries will continue to increase, and there is little likelihood that more jobs will be available in manufacturing unless there is a substantial gain in production or a further decrease in working hours. Therefore, our manufacturing industries are not again likely to serve as a reservoir of jobs for the growing labor supply of the nation."

4. "No move has been made to reduce the continuing inflated overhead costs created by excessive debt burdens on the part of many large corporations." This would apply particularly to the railroad industry.

5. "A drastic revision of our tax structure" is necessary. Lewis noted an intensification of the tendency to shift more of the tax burden of federal, state, and local government onto the small consumers. He cited figures to show that from 1929 to 1938, the percentage of federal revenue derived from taxation upon articles of consumption had increased from 30.2 percent to 51.3 percent. He pointed out that the major changes in the tax structure over the past two years have been a reduction of the capital gains tax and repeal of the undistributed profits tax, and commented, "This has been simply to take two grains of sand out of the scales on the side of the common people and add them on the already overladen side of great wealth."

6. "The stabilization of farm income appears now even more remote than it did at the time last year when it was pointed out how necessary such stabilization was to the general economy."

7. "No progress can be reported on the adjustment and control of credit by the government."

It is the failure of the administration to meet aggressively these economic problems of the nation that constitutes the core of the criticism leveled against it by the CIO. Lewis remarked, "The history of the government's attack upon unemployment has been one of hesitant half steps toward solution, hastily withdrawn before they could become effective." He emphasized that by adding:

The workers and the citizens of this country now know that they can judge the temper and the quality of our national leadership by the response it makes to the challenge of economic chaos. People will not be fooled by highsounding platitudes or dark subterfuges. Rhetoric is not enough. The proof they demand from those who would exercise leadership is steady jobs.

Criticism of the administration was further developed in a protest against the "appeasement" policies recently pursued by the National Labor Relations Board and against the failure to give labor greater representation upon various government boards and agencies. The criticism was chiefly aimed toward securing a fulfillment of the economic and social objectives announced by the New Deal, and served warning that labor reserved its independent role to press for fulfillment of those objectives.

Thus there was no endorsement of the New Deal per se, or any commitment for the 1940 elections. Instead, there was a resolution on political action which commended "the activities and functions of Labor's Non-Partisan League" and urged that:

. . . in view of the deep importance to labor of the approaching 1940 national election, the [CIO] Executive Board take appropriate action to coordinate the political and legislative activities of each of its affiliates and to establish cooperation with progressive groups in support of a constructive program to preserve and extend the political gains and legislative achievements obtained through the efforts and strength of labor for the economic security and social welfare of the American people.

That offers a very condensed summary of the legislative enactments of the CIO convention. This is the program upon which unity was achieved. But the CIO resolved to extend the unity around that program beyond its own ranks. It proclaimed:

The millions of organized workers banded together in the CIO are the main driving force of the progressive movement of workers, farmers, professional people, and small business men, and of all liberal elements in the community. They are also the backbone of the resistance to all forces that threaten our democratic institutions and the liberty and security that Americans hold dear.

AL RICHMOND.

Unhappy Herr Rosenberg

THE unhappiest Nazi of them all, according to the weekly news bulletin the *Hour,* is now Herr Alfred Rosenberg. Before Ribbentrop's comparatively recent rise to power, Rosenberg considered himself Hitler's unofficial foreign minister. A Baltic German born and reared in Tallinn, Estonia, and educated in pre-revolutionary Russian schools, he hated the Soviet Union and planned an early conquest by Nazi diplomacy and arms of the Baltic states, the Ukraine, and as much of the Soviet Union proper as possible. Under his wing in Berlin, White Guard Russians were fed and encouraged in anticipation of the conquest. Ribbentrop's surrender at Moscow came to Rosenberg as a rude shock.

He views the uprooting of scores of thousands of German upper class families in the Baltic countries and their repatriation to the Reich with particular horror. To Rosenberg, this was Hitler's greatest defeat—this abolition of the centuries-old German outposts in the Baltic, this removal of the Teutonic thorn in the flesh of the "uncultured" Ests, Letts, Lithuanians, and Russians. Prior to the signature of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, Rosenberg, together with Goebbels, opposed it vigorously, calling it the worst defeat the Nazis could wish upon themselves. Ribbentrop and Goering sided against the Nazi propaganda minister and his Rosenberg. The latter now feels that while the battle for the pact was won in Berlin, the pact itself was lost in Moscow.

War against Hitlerism?

REPORTING the debate in the House of Lords after the prime minister's speech Thursday, October 12, Raymond Daniell, New York *Times* correspondent writes:

Lord Arnold questioned the wisdom of listing the overthrow of Hitlerism as a British war aim, pointing out that kaiserism was followed by Nazism, and asking whether Chancellor Hitler's downfall would not pave the way for Bolshevism in Central Europe.

Viscount Halifax, the foreign secretary, in reply rebuked Lord Arnold for displaying "more sincerity than judgment." He said he did not intend to extemporize on a subject already covered by the carefully thought out address of the prime minister. The omission from Mr. Chamberlain's statements, he [Halifax] declared, were not oversights, but matters which, after careful consideration, it was thought better to leave out.

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A Boom in Death

Wall Street tries to get the war caldron boiling. Rising prices, minus new production, as an appetizer for a real boom.

Washington.

EVENTS touched off in the economic sphere by the outbreak of the imperialist war in Europe are giving the American people an ominous foretaste of what lies ahead for them if hostilities abroad reach an active stage and if the United States thereupon becomes a major source of supply for the British and French war machines.

The "war boom" that has developed since the Germans began their invasion of Poland has, in all truth, been a small affair. Nevertheless, even as a miniature replica of the economic consequences of a major war boom, the "boomlet" of the past seven weeks already has raised the grave danger of an abrupt slump in economic activity within the next few months, accompanied by curtailed living standards because of higher prices and by increased unemployment.

That this danger may become a reality during the coming winter is a fear which is actively—if still privately—expressed by virtually all of the economists of the New Deal. Some of them foresee a slump as abrupt and as rapid as the one which occurred in late 1937 and early 1938. And, just as was the case in that recent illustration of big business instability, this threatened "recession" would strike the country at a time when the federal government's social expenditures are rapidly declining. WPA payments have been curtailed roughly 30 percent by the reactionary Woodrum bill. Public works outlays will soon begin to dwindle because of the failure of Congress to vote new appropriations at the last session. In other words, a new slump would come at a time when the New Deal is least prepared to support public purchasing power against its impact.

SCRAMBLE FOR COMMODITIES

The war-conditioned events which have produced this threatening outlook are not overly complex. When the imperialist conflict began, the big business world, after taking a backward look at the tremendous price inflation and profiteering boom of the World War, began a scramble for industrial commodities. The result was that within three weeks the prices of industrial commodities had been boosted by about 30 percent on the average. This was entirely a speculative, gambling operation, dictated by a desire to get in on the ground floor of a war price boom and not arising in any sense from any increase in basic demand.

Acting on entirely identical motives, processors, manufacturers of finished goods, and retailers immediately placed large orders with their supplying industries. As a result, total industrial production has expanded by 20 percent since the end of August. But employment has not increased by anywhere near that proportion, nor have payrolls, nor has total national purchasing power. Obviously, as is conceded by such bodies as the Federal Reserve Board and the Department of Commerce, the rise in industrial output has been caused entirely by accumulation of inventories. And inventories are being accumulated not on the basis of actual orders for resale but merely on the hope of such orders and on the hope of a wartime price inflation.

The question which New Deal economists are now asking is this: after inventories have been built up to topheavy levels, what then? Big business inevitably will seek to pass off to the consumers of the nation the 30 percent rise in prices of basic industrial commodities, in all probability with a good margin to spare. But where will there be the purchasing power to absorb these higher prices and these swollen inventories? The obvious answer is that it won't exist, that retailers and distributors at once will cease buying from manufacturers and industrial activity will fall off as rapidly if not more rapidly than it has expanded in the last seven weeks. This is the clear outlook unless prompt measures can be taken by the New Deal to correct the runaway race of big business toward a new "recession."

WALL STREET'S PRAYER

What Wall Street and its ever-ready barometer—the stockmarket—are praying for is that the European hostilities will soon blossom into a "real" war and thereby create the wartime price-and-demand conditions upon which the present boomlet is predicated. But there is increasing skepticism in government quarters as to the efficacy of even Wall Street's solution in avoiding a recession this winter, since it is doubted that British and French purchases under any conditions will reach large proportions for many months to come.

If, however, Wall Street's prayers are answered and a holocaust rivaling or surpassing that of the first imperialist war gets under way in earnest, then no doubt there eventually will be a war boom. Then the dislocations caused by the present boomlet would be magnified many times, the rise in prices much sharper, the accumulation of inventories much greater, and the ultimate collapse much more severe.

In the meantime, even though the dangers ahead are recognized by many of its best minds, the New Deal is hesitant to take direct action to forestall the threatened slump. Distracted by the European war and willing to sidetrack all other measures in order to secure the repeal of the arms embargo, the administration's approach to the new domestic dangers has thus far been strictly verbal. President Roosevelt has expressed his disapproval of profiteering, has instructed some subordinates to "study" the question of war profits taxation, and has asked the Temporary National Economic Committee to keep its eyes open for unjustified price increases. The TNEC in turn has announced its determination to probe into and publicize any instances of excessive price boosts, a procedure which may be of some help but which is scarcely an effective method of coping with Wall Street's domination of industrial price policies. There have been numerous conferences among officials on the question of possible price controls, but thus far they have not resulted in any action.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

There are things which should be done and can be done, however. With public opinion apparently strengthening against our involvement in the imperialist war and with sentiment within organized labor definitely crystallizing in favor of renewed attention to necessary domestic reforms, the New Deal could confront Congress with an immediate economic program which would be assured of powerful popular support. It could demand the reopening of relief legislation to secure a large and needed increase in the WPA appropriation as well as the elimination of the repressive restrictions of the Woodrum bill. It could demand immediate large appropriations for necessary public works. It could use the evidence unearthed by the TNEC's investigation of monopolies as the basis for new legislation weakening Wall Street's power to manipulate industrial prices almost at will. It could impose a drastic anti-profiteering surtax on excess corporation profits which would remove at least part of the incentive for exorbitant price boosts by big business.

With such a program carried into action at the special session of Congress, the nation would be given at least some protection against an impending depression this winter as well as against the graver dangers which would arise if a major war boom should ever materialize. It would by no means give the New Deal a perfect control over economic developments but it would be a starter. Moreover, it might well provide the groundwork for a further-reaching and more realistic economic program such as would be represented by nationalization of the big banks—which incidentally would give the government a measure of control over inventory policies, besides breaking Wall Street's credit monopoly—by nationalization of the depressed and archaic railroad industry, and by the development of a truly comprehensive housing campaign.

ROBERT NORTON.

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William Gropper

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Civil Liberties in Crisis

National Conference of ACLU warns against war hysteria. Congressman Dies and Louis Waldman did not like it. America forewarned.

MARTIN DIES doing his daily dozen is becoming as regular a feature of the newspapers as the boxed-in weather reports. Only, his stuff gets a bigger play. He delivered his copy on time when the National Conference on Civil Liberties opened at the Hotel Biltmore in New York last weekend. Next to the press release announcing Atty. Gen. Frank Murphy, Sen. Elbert Thomas, Chairman Warren J. Madden of the NLRB, and editor William Allen White as the speakers for the opening dinner was Dies' charge that the whole affair was under the thumb of "two or three Communist fronts."

If the sixty distinguished sponsors that cooperated with the American Civil Liberties Union and the other organizations in calling the conference, and the long list of prominent federal government officials, authorities on constitutional law, educators, religious leaders, and publicists who took part in the seven panel discussions weren't sure of the crucial need for and significance of that conference, Dies' last-minute blast should have convinced them.

A BREAK IN THE SILENCE

It was time that such a conference should meet to speak out against the rising tide of anti-democratic propaganda and activity in the United States. It was a welcome break in the dangerous silence that had thus far attended the daily announcements from official and unofficial quarters all over the country that "drives against subversive activities" were getting under way.

To clear the air in the present emergency, the program of the National Conference on Civil Liberties called for discussion by experts of the rights of Negroes and of aliens, of censorship of communication, of academic freedom and religious liberty, law and civil liberties, and labor and employer rights. The history of rights in each field was summarized, their present status presented, and a review of legislation affecting them outlined. Resolutions and specific proposals for action were not allowed to be made; only findings were reported back to the last general session.

Because no resolutions were permitted, a clear statement of the conference's position on today's fight for the Bill of Rights did not materialize. The chief value of the conference, therefore, rested in the fact that it gave government officials in positions of grave responsibility in the field of law and justice a chance to meet with representatives of all kinds of organizations concerned with the issue of civil liberties and to talk over the fate of civil liberties in past times of crisis.

It was in sizing up the prospects for civil rights in face of today's war that several speakers gave thanks for having a Frank Murphy in the office of attorney general instead of a Mitchell Palmer. Just before the attorney general spoke at the Friday night dinner a Scripps-Howard staff writer in Washington wrote that "the administration hopes the presence of Attorney General Murphy . . . as star speaker will cushion the kickback of early excesses in the government's spy hunt." Mr. Murphy's recently announced drive against "subversive activities" had led many people to believe that the New Deal was lending itself to a revival of Palmerism. That belief was not weakened much by Murphy's speech. In referring to the Palmer raids of the last war he excused their savagery on the ground that they sprang from misdirected zeal rather than from evil motives. The vigilantes, he said, were so imbued with the rightness of their cause that all opposition became intolerable to them.

Like his superior, John Rogge, young assistant attorney general, pledged that "the Department of Justice will respect the civil rights of all persons living in this country, whether or not its officers approve of their political program or social views." Mr. Rogge will supervise the Criminal Division's special unit in charge of espionage and propaganda, to be closely coordinated with the Civil Liberties unit recently created by Frank Murphy in the Department of Justice.

COUNTER TENDENCIES

Every now and then during the course of the conference tendencies that ran counter to the general purpose of the proceedings became apparent. Arthur Garfield Hays, for instance, immediately after making a somewhat academic statement in favor of granting full civil liberties to Communists, warned his hearers that the threat to the Bill of Rights these days came not from the right, as innocents might think, but from the left. Dropping the judicial tone, he took one potshot after another at the Communists, saying in asides that the same went for Nazis too.

Playing ball with Mr. Hays was the lone representative from the Dies committee, Congressman Jerry Voorhis. You remember that the erstwhile liberal Mr. Voorhis sided publicly with his committee chairman in demanding the outlawing of the Communist Party, but with a cautioning word that America must be careful not to infringe upon the civil liberties of others while suppressing Communists. At the conference Mr. Voorhis went on record for "the defense of liberty only for those who *truly* espouse liberty."

A quick lateral from Voorhis to Morris Ernst, counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union. Mr. Ernst took the pass and did some fancy broken-field running through the session on law and civil liberties. Mr. Ernst, complying with Dies' dearest wish, urged "legislation that would compel every organization using the mails to file the name of the organization, officers, directors, copy of the budget, copy of printed material, names of subscribers, members, or donators." Queried from the floor as to whether such legislation would subject a Democrat in the Republican state of Maine or a miners' union member in a company coal town to injury, Mr. Ernst answered that it would, unfortunately, hurt a few people. But Mr. Ernst is willing to martyr himself. "The Bill of Rights demands legislation which will prevent anonymity!"

That kind of reasoning and the atmosphere of polite Red-baiting which hung over some of the sessions marked the weaknesses of the conference. Underlying almost everything that was said was the assumption that the USA will certainly get into the war now going on in Europe. On such a basis you could expect no aggressive program to combat the threat of our being dragged into the war. Feeling that we would be in it soon, "playing a noble role in a democratic war" to protect and enlarge American investments, many of the speakers were able only to utter mild warnings against letting war hysteria overrun civil liberties. They did not see the vital connection between the necessity of civil rights for Communists and the fight to keep America out of the war.

Earl Browder pointed that out in his remarks from the floor at one of the panel discussions:

> The forces which are moving against American civil liberties are the same forces which want this war to go on as long as possible for the sake of the profits they expect to make out of it, and which are preparing to take this country into the war at an opportune moment. If they direct their main attacks today against the Communist Party, is it possible that this is because they think the Communists might help them stir up war hysteria and to drag America into the slaughter? Merely to put the question is to answer it in the contrary sense; the forces involving America in the senseless destruction and slaughter of the imperialist war strike first of all against the Communist Party because they see in it the leader and the symbol of all the deepest anti-war and peace sentiments of the masses, which they wish to silence and to crush. The American workers and farmers, all toiling people of the world, will understand that when the government of our country begins to move against the Communist Party, to limit or extinguish its rights under the American Constitution and Bill of Rights, it is taking decisive steps toward entering the imperialist world war.
>
> As for the Communist Party, it is far from being strong enough to be decisive in determining the course our country will take. That will be decided by the people represented in this conference, and above all, by the great and growing labor movement which is the basic democracy of Amer-

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ica. But whatever your decision, remember that you are deciding not the fate of the Communist Party which may even grow stronger and more swiftly under persecution, but the fate of American democracy, which for good or ill, and whether you like it or not, will be determined by its ability to maintain its rights for all, even including the Communists.

MILTON MELTZER.

Out of the Fog

MOST penetrating analysis of the new problems confronting the American people upon the outbreak of war in Europe comes from the pen of Alex Bittelman in the October issue of the *Communist,* theoretical publication of the Communist Party of the United States. Bittelman declares that the European conflict is:

. . . an imperialist and predatory war on both sides. When Chamberlain says that England is fighting fascism, that it is fighting for peace and decency, he is deceiving the world as well as his own people. Because the following questions must be answered at once: If he wanted to fight fascism and aggression why did he abandon collective security? Why did he sabotage to death the negotiations with the Soviet Union? Why did he permit the war on China? Why did he conspire in Munich with German fascism to bring about the destruction of Czechoslovakia? Why did he strangle the Spanish republic? Why did he seek to direct German fascism against the Soviet Union? And finally, *why did he follow a policy of antagonism to the United States?*

Following through his analysis of the different groups within the American capitalist class, Bittelman emphasizes the new role of Lindbergh in American politics, the spokesman of those who "seek to make America the instrument whereby the present imperialist war between Germany on the one hand, and the Anglo-French combination on the other could be transformed into a joint imperialist and counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union." The emergence of Lindbergh on the political arena also reveals "the intricate conspiracies of the House of Morgan itself, which works with one hand for immediate American assistance to England . . . and with the other puts forth Lindbergh to help keep us out of any involvement, but who in reality works for bringing us into a bigger and more criminal war."

The position of the majority of the American people, says Bittelman:

. . . is today reflected more in the *declarations* of the administration . . . rather than its *actual course.* The logic of the administration's position, the ever increasing pressure of the decisive sections of finance capital, and the so-called national unity (which is not national at all) that is forming itself around the administration—all of these may tend to widen the gap between the administration's declarations to keep America out of the war, and its actual course which tends to lead into it.

Elaborating upon this comment of the Roosevelt policies, Bittelman criticizes the national unity which is being established in Washington. He observes that:

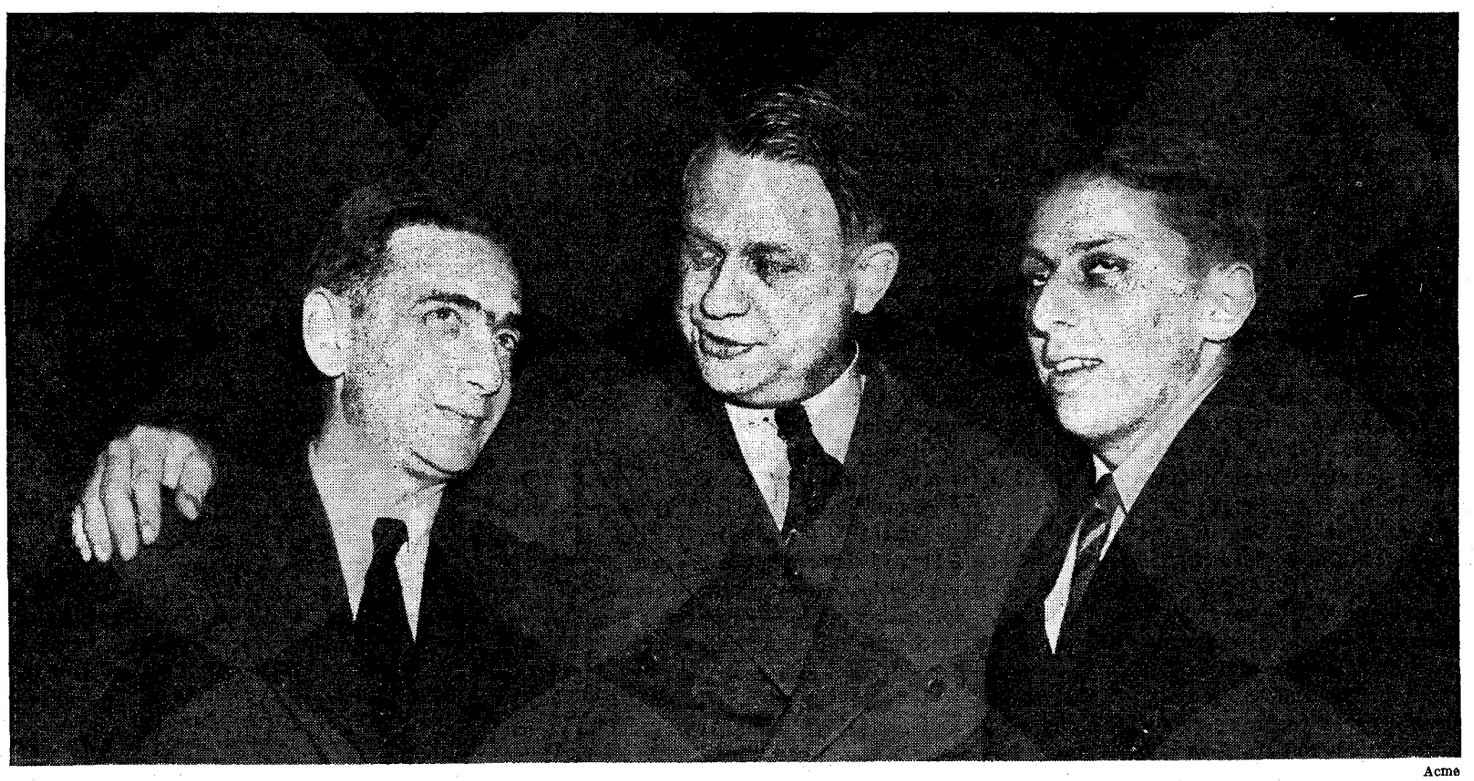
The real nation is not there. The workers, the toiling farmers, and the exploited middle classes —the nation—cannot be there because this grouping around the administration *will be objectively and couldn't be anything else but an instrument for the promotion of Wall Street's imperialist orientation in the war.* It may also become an instrument for the promotion of Wall Street's reactionary, anti-democratic, anti-labor, and anti-farmer orientation in domestic affairs. A national unity which would contain all these potentialities for hurting the overwhelming majority of the American people cannot be considered national in any sense of the word.

From this it follows, Bittelman continues, *"that the struggle for the economic and political needs of the masses, for the protection and improvement of their standards and rights is the major task of the period.* It is inseparable from the struggle for keeping America out of war. This is the content today of the fight for American national and social security."

The AP Corrects Itself

IT SEEMS there was a cook on the *Bremen,* and a jolly fine cook was he. Elbert Post was his name, and he cooked up a tale that the *Bremen,* German super-steamer, was snug in the Soviet harbor of Murmansk. The New York *Times* featured the story on its front page and the Associated Press serviced all newspapers with a photo, No. 13588, toplined: *"Bremen* Lands at Murmansk, USSR."

Two days later, the AP acknowledged its error—the admission was printed in a nook on Page 3 of the *Times*—with the words: "additional information reveals this picture was made before the *Bremen* left New York harbor, but was carried to Holland by E. Post, a cook on the *Bremen.*"



Acme

NEED MORE BE SAID? *The Chinese say a picture is worth ten thousand words. Here you have Rep. Martin Dies, in center, publicly displaying his affection for such enemies of the people as —you've guessed it—the spurious "general"—"Ginsberg-Krivitsky." Krivitsky is to the left of Dies. On the right stands Boris Shub, the "general's" translator. He is the son of a luminary on the "Daily Forward" which was a leading anti-Soviet organ before Dies knew what the initials USSR meant. "New Masses" first exposed the spurious Ginsberg-Krivitsky last spring.*

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An Evening at the Executioner's

Joseph North reminisces on the death of Robert Elliott, electrocutor for five states. Echoes of Sacco and Vanzetti.

TO SPEND a few minutes away from Europe's kaleidoscopic politics, I would like to tell a little true story—not a pretty little story—about that man who died the other day, Executioner Robert G. Elliott, whose life work consisted of throwing the switch on some three hundred men and women. Among them were a couple he "couldn't figure out"—Sacco and Vanzetti.

"Those two were the hardest cases I ever worked on," he told me back in 1929. "Why, they made speeches from the chair. Nobody should make speeches from the chair," he said. "I couldn't figure that couple out."

I was a cub reporter then for a Pennsylvania paper and had been assigned to cover the execution of a pair of lads who went into highway robbery and ended in the electric chair.

I was having some coffee in the dining room of the little mountain inn where I stayed the night before the execution when a gaunt, middle-aged man sat down beside me. He looked like a smalltown merchant, a village banker, and I said to him, after exchanging salutations, "I understand Mr. Elliott is staying here tonight." The man stood up suddenly, his face weary and lined as you have seen in the photographs, and said, "I'm Elliott. I suppose now you would prefer to have your coffee alone."

ALL NIGHT LONG

"Oh, no," I replied, "please sit down, Mr. Elliott—please." He complied, hesitantly, and then he began his rationalization. It required the rest of the evening and until morning for him to finish. He was no ready talker and the words came painfully. He said finally, "What room are you in? I'll stop by later tonight." He said that since this was the first case I had ever covered I might be wanting a little company and maybe a drink or two before morning. "I've known lots of reporters," he told me, "and they don't usually like these assignments the first time. Later, they get used to it, it seems."

He was right, for I was feeling pretty low, about as low as I can remember up to that time. I had ridden in the car with the two men in that long journey across the mountains to the execution chamber. I thought of them, in their night's lodging next to the electric chair, in that windowless tower where those about to die spent their last few hours thinking about things. We had walked into the tower after that long auto trip with the deputies, and there was a big sign saying "SILENCE" and we signed our names in a heavy book and walked up the winding iron stairs. Then the guards unfastened the manacles separating the deputies from the prisoners and the two condemned men went in behind the bars to wait. Those two lads were waiting.

I remember one of the deputies, a big, blubbering man who was able to get at a bottle quite a few times along the trip despite his shackled arm. He got flustered when his prisoner stood behind the bars and said, poking his hand through for a final handshake, "Well, son, take care of yourself." One of the two had ridden the whole way with a huge Bible in his lap—he was nineteen—and he had nothing to say all along the journey, which went through some magnificent country for those who had eyes to look. He sat quiet the whole way, silent, hugging his Bible, looking occasionally at the scenery. It happened to be Christmas week, and, though it drizzled outside, the windows of the homes along the road were cheery with wreaths and holly, and now and then we passed big well lit Christmas trees. The nineteen-year-old just clung to the Bible and was silent. His companion, a man of twenty-seven, a World War vet and father of two kids, was out to prove he was a man who could take it; he chatted cheerfully, cracking a few bawdy jokes, and told his buddy to cheer up for the worst was yet to come. Once, when we stopped in a Coffee Pot for a moment on one of the Appalachian peaks, he murmured to the boy, thinking nobody overheard him, "Don't let them get you, kid. Take it easy." I felt then they were two against the world, two little men bucking the whole business, trying to put up a front, a last-minute defiance. They would show the world how to go out of it. Nobody could say they were yellow, the elder one was out to prove.

And now they were in their cell waiting for the morning, for 7:00 a.m. when the state requires executions to go off, on schedule, like the well known trains running on time in all well regulated countries. I lay in bed, clothes on, looking up at the ceiling thinking about it when, about midnight, the door opened a bit and Elliott's haggard face peeked through. "How about a little drink?" he whispered. Lord knows I could stand one (or a few more, rather), and I followed him down the thickly carpeted hall, and walked into his room after him. The shades were drawn tight, but all the lights in the oldfashioned chandelier were bright, and four others were in the room, two men and two women. "Meet my friends," Elliott said. One was the undertaker who was to bring the bodies back home to the families and the other was the state official who presided over executions. The two girls were friends of the state official. "Just a couple of gals from Altoona," he said, cheerfully. The party was as merry as it could be under the circumstances which, everybody admitted, were somewhat of a handicap. Elliott and I sat in a corner of the room, near a sideboard on which about half a dozen bottles of Scotch stood, and we talked between many drinks. I remember he seemed as sober and dignified at the end of the drinking as when we began, and he told me the long story:

"HELP WANTED"—IN THE TOMBS

He had had some training as an electrician's helper and had answered an ad once for a job in the Tombs, where they needed such a person. He didn't know when he answered that ad that he was picking up a career, for some time afterward the state executioner was taken ill, or died—I don't exactly remember the circumstances. (Somebody told me later Elliott's predecessor committed suicide.) And Elliott was offered the job. So the electrician's helper thought it over; he had a family to support, and, after due consideration, took the job. He said somebody had to do it, and evidently it was in the cards for him, and who was he to turn down his call when it was in the cards?

Electrocution was the most scientific, sanest way to do it, he said. The two-thousand-volt jab did the business in a trice, a second or two, and what could be cleaner, quicker, more humane than to put enemies of society away that way, he asked. No, indeed, he felt no compunction about the job; it was society's deed and not his. He was merely the "thirteenth man on the jury and the right hand of the judge." That's exactly how he put it, I recall, and he repeated it a number of times during the evening. He considered himself a public spirited citizen, he said, a man who had, in effect, volunteered to do a particularly difficult bit of public work and he did it. After a number of drinks he said, in a way he was a public benefactor. He was doing a job that had to be done, and nobody else had the gumption to do it. Yes, it wasn't easy, believe me, he said, but it's a job society must do and he was the man who was picked. It was a great responsibility, a heavy responsibility, and not every man could shoulder it, but he could.

FAMILY LIFE

I was a little over twenty then and I had been feeling pretty bad earlier in the evening, and as he talked on I began to feel worse for some reason or other I couldn't figure out. When he told me about his family life and the fact that he had a Ford car which, he said, was geared to reach a speed of eighty miles an hour and his only pleasure was to get into the car of a Sunday and drive hell-bent for heaven up to Canada, I began to feel worse.

After a while the undertaker slumped to the floor in a heap and Elliott and the state official gently carried him to his room. A little later the other guests retired and Elliott con-

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tinued explaining to me. It was about 4:30 in the morning, and every time I got up to go he began another chapter in his story. "I'm about all in, Mr. Elliott," I said finally, and got up to go. "Wait a minute," he said. "Wait another minute. I'm not finished telling you."

SACCO AND VANZETTI

And then he told me the story of Ruth Snyder, and Sacco and Vanzetti. Ruth Snyder was the most difficult case he had ever worked on (he referred to his executions as cases, as though he were a doctor or a lawyer). It was difficult because she was a woman and, besides, he knew her well when she was a girl. It was no easy job to carry through his civic responsibilities in that case, let me tell you, he said. And then when he mentioned Sacco and Vanzetti, I started. I had forgotten he had been their executioner and I asked him about them. "Oh, those two," he said, "they were the hardest cases of all. Why, they made speeches from the chair. Now nobody ought to be allowed to make speeches from the chair. It isn't a political rally," he said. One of them, the older one, he said, the one with the mustaches, made a long speech, but he cannot recall it because he wasn't listening. He was too busy, he said evenly, to listen much. The other said only a few words. Both of them talked in an Italian accent, he recalled, but he couldn't remember much of what they said. All he knew was they shouldn't be making political speeches from the chair.

Finally, I staggered off to my room, but it felt as though I had slept only a moment or two when he knocked on my door. "It's time to go, bud," he said, and I got up, somewhat unsteadily, and followed him out. His car was waiting in the morning fog and he helped me in the car. He glanced at me as he was about to get in and he said, "Say, bud, you forgot your tie." I reached at my collar and I had forgotten it. "Just sit there, kid," he said, "I'll get you one. I've got another in my room. Just wait there a second." He returned a few moments afterward with a tie he helped me adjust, a yellow one with red circles in it, I recall.

NOT CHEERFUL

Before he got in, he walked down the street a bit to a little creek and looked over the railing. He spent a few moments there. I could see him down the street in that early morning mist and it wasn't cheerful.

We got to the penitentiary about 6:45, and as soon as we entered the room he became impersonal, quiet, efficient; the two lads I had ridden over the mountains with, came in one by one. The youngest walked in first and he still carried his Bible and the last words he said were "May God have mercy on my soul." The doctor pronounced him dead in 3:14—I believe that's how they put it.

The second walked in behind the priest, the older one this was, dressed in that curiously informal attire they put on the condemned, bedroom slippers, shirt, and loose trousers. He looked like a man going to the front porch for the Sunday papers. He glanced at the chair, sat down, looked around the room, and before Elliott put the mask on his face, smiled at us and said, "Well, so long, boys, see you later." He was dead in 4:26.

I met Elliott on the train returning to Philadelphia. He gave me a cigar but I couldn't smoke it and our eyes didn't seem to meet. It was different now, I had seen him at work, and the moment was painful. "Well, goodby, son," he said. "It's always hardest the first time. I guess I'll go out and get some air," he added. "By the way," he reminded me, offhand, "I hope you don't mention my name in your story. It doesn't do any good and it's not necessary. Mail me a copy of the story, will you?" I mumbled something and he went out, tall, narrow-shouldered, shoulders bent.

THE NAME DIDN'T MATTER

I did leave the name out of my story but the city editor called over the desk, "Say, what the hell—you left the executioner's name out of the story." I didn't try to explain, knowing it wouldn't cut any ice with him, that the executioner wanted his name left out. It was no use saying the executioner's name didn't matter, that he was only the "thirteenth man on the jury, the right hand of the judge." I kept quiet and the story carried the name, Robert G. Elliott. Needless to say, I never sent the executioner the story.

Now I see Elliott has written an autobiography which will appear shortly and I know he will never mention this episode. I do it not to cast any reflections on an honest man's name, but simply because the episode somehow seemed very significant to me then. I have been to a war and seen men go into battle and die but I never felt more miserable than that dawn when the executioner rationalized his job, when the pariah tried to edge his way into society, and the business always stuck with me.

I see the headlines have it that he was buried as a "kindly, generous man" and I suppose the headlines this time were not far from wrong. He only executed a few over three hundred men and women. Trivial stuff compared with what the headlines are up to these days. I've talked to editors and publishers, too, and I never felt the same way as I did about the electrician's helper who answered an ad for a job in the Tombs. The editors read Sacco's and Vanzetti's speeches and understood them.

JOSEPH NORTH.

The Twentieth Century Renaissance

Glimpsed in a Flushing Meadow, 1939

Look! See what matters of fact those myths have become.
Do you see those old tales,
Those longings out of the heart
Of the masses of mankind, these
Tri-motored carpets, turbine league boots,
Photo-electric philosopher's stones,
Radiant, endocrine fountains of youth?

And look! There is evidence here
That another myth, the Utopian one,
Is gestating everywhere. Listen!
Do you hear the deep rhythms beneath
The sounds of the day's wars and rumors
Of barbarism returning and democracy dying?
Listen! Science, the universal tongue,
Is whispering in all countries:
"Man, you have learned the causes of hunger and war and disease."

Let not our hearts be troubled by
The travail of our time. It is a Renaissance
Vaster than that which woke the world from medieval sleep.
Here in this Flushing meadow,
Amid this harvest of five thousand years,
Sown by all races and reaped from all soils,
The inextinguishable human spirit speaks:
"Act! Be brave! The brotherhood of man is nigh."

HENRY HART.

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Lynch Stuff

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: "Among American citizens there should be no forgotten men and no forgotten races. This is a wise and truly American policy."—*Franklin D. Roosevelt.*

CONGRESSIONAL COMMENT: "The federal government should not infringe upon the citizens' constitutional right to lynch."—*Anonymous (R).*

A PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT: ". . . the modern little cottages, landscaped grounds, playgrounds for the kinky-headed children, and recreation halls for the grown-up niggers, while many a good taxpaying white citizen wanders by, without a job or a place to rest his head!"—*W. T. Farnell, candidate for Florida State Legislature, speaking over radio station WMBR, Jacksonville, Oct. 17, 1938, on federal rehousing project for Negroes.*

PUBLIC OPINION: "Nigger, if you can read, you better run. If you can't read, you better run anyway."—*Roadside sign, Pasco County, Florida.*

FALSE ALARM: "Somebody ought to call out the fire department to turn hoses on 'em!"—*Rural white Floridian, upon observing line of Negroes at the Duval County Courthouse, Jacksonville, Fla., who were registering to vote in the general election, 1938. (The $2 poll tax had been abolished.)*

OFFICIAL PROTEST: "Dear God, we know that we are behind the door when the good things of life are given out."—*Madame Mary McCloud Bethune (NYA Negro director) during conference with Florida Works Progress Administration officials on the inadequacy of projects for Negroes.*

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: "Whereas, the constitution of the American Legion upholds the enforcement of law and order; be it resolved, by the American Legion in convention assembled, that it reaffirms its previous action in condemning mob violence and lynching throughout the United States."—*Summary of Proceedings, Eighteenth National Convention, Page 57.*

SOLID SOUTH: "Nearly 20 percent of persons lynched are mental defectives. In considerable areas of the deep South, leading citizens believe lynching necessary. In these places, mobs are commonly made up of leading citizens. Mobs composed of leading citizens are quiet and orderly. They rarely mutilate a victim. Mobs led by irresponsible persons are savage and sadistic, frequently destroying public and private property, torturing their victims with extended mutilation."—*Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching.*

Woodcut by George Willet

SIGN OF THE CROSSES: *Atlanta, Jan. 16, (AP)*—Dr. Hiram W. Evans, Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, said today he had accepted an invitation from Bishop Gerald P. O'Hara of the Savannah-Atlanta Roman Catholic Diocese to attend dedication ceremonies Wednesday for Atlanta's new co-cathedral of Christ the King. The cathedral stands on the site of the former national headquarters of the Klan. . . .

A few months ago Evans announced the Klan had abandoned racial and religious issues, and that he planned to devote its efforts to fighting "Communism and the CIO."

In a brief comment later, the bishop said the church "never was anxious to make any issue" over the Klan and that he regarded the invitation as a matter of no unusual significance.

TESTIMONY: "One time there was a Spaniard in Key West, called Islena, who owned a coffee shop. Islena had a good reputation, but somebody told it on him that he was living with a colored girl.

"So one night the Ku Klux Klan come marching down Duval Street, all dressed in white robes with hoods over their faces and carrying torches. They marched right up to Islena's house, and he was in bed with a colored girl, for true. They took him out of bed and down to the beach and whipped him till his kidneys burst and the blood ran out of his *pinga.* Islena fought so hard he got loose long enough to tear off the mask of the man who was whipping him. He recognized who it was, and swore he would get revenged. After he was unconscious they hung him up in a tree.

"They left him for dead but he came to his senses and got loose from the rope. I don't know how he done it, but he did, and walked all the way back to his house.

"The next day it was the day before Christmas. Mr. Robinson—he was a very respected man—was walking past the Cuban Club carrying a lot of groceries home to his family. When he stepped in front of the alley Islena came out, his pants all bloody in front and with a revolver in his hand. He shot Mr. Robinson in the belly five times, and Mr. Robinson fell on the sidewalk, begging Islena not to shoot again.

"But Islena stood there and put five more bullets in the gun and shot Mr. Robinson five more times. Then he sat down on the sidewalk and pretty soon the police came and took him upstairs in the jail and beat him some more. After he was unconscious they grabbed him by the heels and dragged him down those iron steps, his head cracking on every step.

"Then they threw him in the back of an automobile and took him to the beach. He was already dead, but they hung his body up in a palm tree. It stayed there I don't know how long before the buzzards and smell got so bad they had to cut it down."—*Eyewitness, Key West, Fla.*

GOVERNOR'S LINE: "Complete investigation; full punishment."—*Fred P. Cone, governor of Florida, April 3, 1939.*

SHERIFF'S LINE: "The prisoner was snatched from me when I turned my head to answer a question while he was on the way to jail."—*Deputy Sheriff Herbert Kennedy, Pavo, Ga., May 1936.*

JURY'S VERDICT: "Death at the hands of parties unknown."—*Twelve men tried and true.*

LAST WORDS: "Anti-lynching laws are well-meaning, stupid, unworkable. For the next fifty years Negroes can look forward to being lynched."—*Ben Cochran, "Forum," "Ousting Judge Lynch."*

STETSON KENNEDY.

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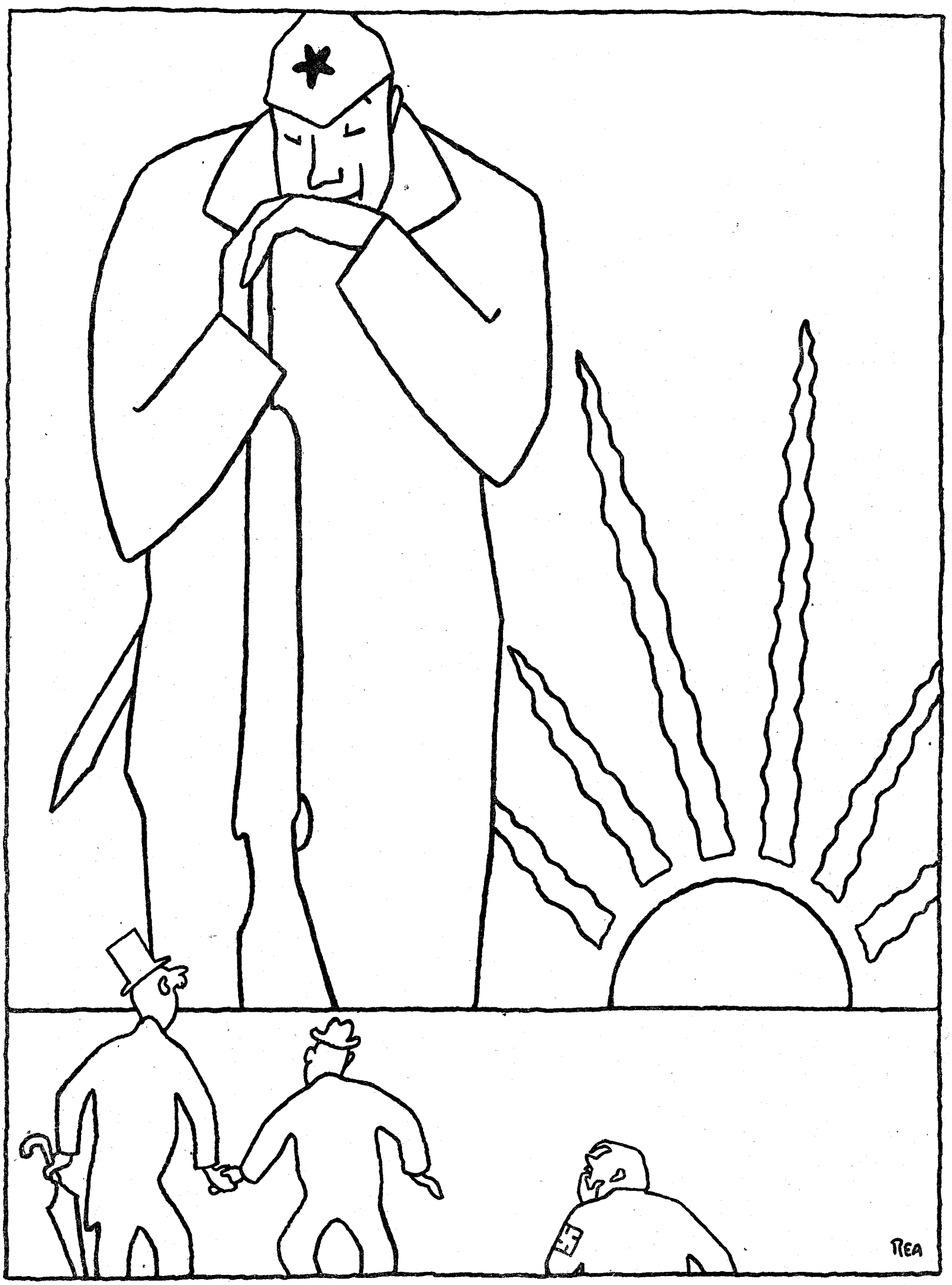

Gardner Rea

"Little men, what now?"

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Ganging Up on Neutrality

LET'S keep the record straight. On September 21 President Roosevelt asked the special session of Congress to repeal the embargo provisions of the existing Neutrality Act on the ground that they are "most vitally dangerous to American neutrality, American security, and American peace." He also urged that legislation be adopted "to require all purchases by belligerents to be made in cash and cargoes to be carried in the purchasers' own ships, at the purchasers' own risk."

The President said nothing about helping Britain and France—though there were some who suggested that this was the real motive behind the administration's desire to repeal the embargo. He said nothing about making any exceptions to the ban on credits or to the provision that all commodities purchased by belligerents must be transported in their own ships.

On September 30 the majority of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee submitted a bill embodying the President's recommendations, but adding a section permitting ninety-day credits to belligerents. The majority did not say that these ninety-day credits were desired in order to help Britain and France and American business interests—though there were some who suggested that such might be the case.

On October 2 the neutrality debate opened in Congress. Presumably it expressed a difference of opinion about the best way to keep America *neutral* and out of the European imperialist war—though there were some who suggested that it was really a debate over whether we should or should not help one side in the conflict, Anglo-French imperialism, to the greater profit of Wall Street.

The debate has been in progress for more than two weeks. The specific issue under discussion is, as NEW MASSES has previously stated, relatively unimportant. Neither retention nor repeal of the arms embargo by itself will either keep the United States out or get it into the war. But what is important is the character of the campaign to lift the embargo, the forces behind it, and their influence on the future course of the New Deal.

To put it bluntly, the New Deal has formed a united front with the dominant sections of reactionary finance capital in behalf of the Anglo-French side in the imperialist war. When the embargo was slowly strangling the Spanish republic in violation of our treaties with Spain, the New Deal turned a deaf ear to the pleas for its removal. Now, however, it is showing extraordinary eagerness to aid, not democracy, but the reactionary ruling classes of Britain and France, in a war for which they are jointly responsible with Nazi Germany and from which the people can only lose, no matter which side wins. Is the American public really more favorable to the idea of lifting the embargo now than it was in the Spanish war? Seventy-five percent of the voters, according to the Gallup poll, favored loyalist Spain, but the embargo was not lifted. Can it be that the attitude of Wall Street has made the difference? And if Wall Street determines the New Deal's foreign policy, what assurance is there that it will not exercise similar influence on domestic questions?

Under pressure of big business, modification of the "carry" provision of the proposed legislation is now being planned. The shipping interests (who since 1917 have milked $3,000,000,000 out of the national treasury), abetted by the Maritime Commission, are demanding that American ships be permitted to carry commodities destined for British and French possessions in the Americas, the Far East, and Africa on the ground that these areas are "out of the danger zone." In return for this concession the ninety-day credit provision has now been dropped. Thus, what was supposed to be a cash-and-carry bill is about to become a cash-and-carry-with-exceptions bill. What is to prevent it from becoming something more in a few months as Wall Street's Chamberlain crawl grows more ecstatic?

The mask of neutrality has already been dropped by administration spokesmen. In his reply to Col. Charles Lindbergh on October 14, Senator Pittman, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, did not even mention neutrality. He openly stated that "the present law injures Great Britain and France, and . . . its repeal will remove such injury." (The truth is that it does not injure Britain and France; it merely refrains from helping them.) And Pittman, without consulting Congress, even went so far as to list two neutral countries, the Soviet Union and Italy, as belligerents on the side of Germany who were supposedly being helped by the present law. The anti-Soviet overtones in Pittman's speech were particularly ominous. They indicate that behind the big business repeal drive there is an additional motive, already intimated by Walter Lippmann and Dorothy Thompson: to help Britain and France bring Germany in line for a holy crusade against the USSR.

There are sinister forces on the other side of the embargo issue too: Hearst, Father Coughlin, Hoover, Colonel Lindbergh. These people oppose American assistance to Britain and France because they want all the imperialist powers to unite against the Soviet Union. Hearst has expressed it openly and there were strong hints in both of Lindbergh's recent radio addresses. The differences between this group of reactionary isolationists and the reactionary repealers are rapidly disappearing. The Hoover-Lindbergh proposal that the embargo be kept on "offensive" weapons and removed on "defensive" arms—a distinction which is practically non-existent—is an effort to effect a compromise that will unite both groups.

But the vast majority of the American people, whatever their opinion of the embargo, want no blood profits and no schemes that will enlist American support for either side in this bandit war. Not only our peace, but our civil liberties and standards of living are at stake. In the words of John L. Lewis at the recent CIO convention:

> The United States has avoided involvement in the European slaughter, but we can continue to escape the misfortunes which have overtaken much of the rest of the world only if we set our own house in order and build up a bulwark of democratic resistance against all the forces in this country which lead to fascism and war.

Strange Interlude

STRANGE interlude in Europe. Remembrance of things past haunts the statesmen on both banks of the Rhine. This is a moment of prolonged hesitation, of misgivings. The ghosts of several Munichs stalk the diplomatic avenues as Neville Chamberlain and Edouard Daladier disdain Germany's plea for armistice. The essence of Daladier's remarks a week ago last Wednesday was an almost frantic anxiety over the security of France. Understandable, of course, coming from the man whose policies and practices quite systematically reduced France to its present war alliance and eventual isolation. The day following, the prime minister spoke with more bluntness, but his words were redolent with that sentimental guile which customarily rouses the tory MP's to their feet. Both statesmen found it necessary to review the numerous instances in which Herr Hitler had broken his word, as though anxious to eradicate from the memory of history *their* share in the Hitlerian deceptions of the past. Both speeches left the door slightly ajar; perhaps not for the Nazis, perhaps for some cabal of generals within Germany with whom the Anglo-French entente would like to cooperate along the paths from which the Nazis strayed. Both speeches were directed to the British and French public, to the peoples of neutral countries. A rationale for the war was projected, but no incantation of war aims as such.

In the address of Neville Chamberlain, there was a new note: the most deliberate chicanery, the most disgusting deception yet advanced. "Looking into the future," said the septuagenarian, "we can see that deep changes will inevitably leave their mark on every field of men's thought and action, and if humanity is to guide right the new forces that will be in operation, all nations will have their part to play. . . . We are not only aiming at victory, but rather looking beyond it, to the laying of a foundation of a better international system which will mean that war will not be the lot of every succeeding generation."

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A better international system indeed! What hypocrisy, coming from the mouths of men who systematically undermined the safeguards of a system that might have guaranteed this generation against fascism and against war!

Disarmament? Who dares to bandy this word about today: when the peoples of every capitalist nation are being bled at every vein so that armaments intended for their mutual destruction "accumulate while men decay." When the statesmen of the imperialist world cannot rally their unwilling populations for a senseless slaughter except by conjuring up the visions of a new world order (the proof and reality of socialism), that in itself is a measure of their decadence and despair. It is proof how deep within the popular subconscious lies the socialist idea.

The German Communists Live

WHILE rumors continued to preoccupy observers and commentators to the effect that Ernst Thaelmann had been given his freedom by the Nazi government, the German Communist Party made public last week its manifesto on the present war. Defending the traditional conception that "the liberation of the German people will not come from the outside, that is, by reliance upon the war, but would result from the struggle of the German people for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship," the Communist manifesto severely criticized those emigrant leaders of the German Social-Democracy who rushed to support British and French imperialism.

The German Communists, says the manifesto as released from Stockholm, Sweden, and published in the October 11 issue of the *Daily Worker,* "place their hopes neither on the bayonets of Chamberlain and Daladier nor on a 'liberal' wing of the German bourgeoisie, but solely on the united force of the people, on the solidarity and struggle of the international working class, and on the aid of the great and powerful Soviet Union."

Castigating emigrant leaders of the Social-Democracy who have refused cooperation with the Communists in the past six years, the manifesto emphasizes that the Communists "feel themselves more than ever inwardly bound with all the Social-Democratic functionaries and workers within Germany, who have overcome their policy of 'wait-and-see,' and have taken a stand for the unity of the labor movement."

With a prophetic heroism, the manifesto proclaims: "We are convinced that the coming revolutionary democracy in Germany will not be a repetition of the Weimar republic, not a 'democracy' of British imperialism, for it will make short shrift of the Besteiros, Casados, and Noskes.

". . . from the collaboration of Communists and Social Democrats at the front as well as the hinterland, from the mutual comradeship of soldiers and workers . . . the united revolutionary party will arise that will be in a position to lead the entire German people."

The "Times" Makes a War

BUBBLES, rather than bombs, burst in mid-air last week as the clash between the Soviet Union and Finland simply failed to come off. The American press, notably the New York *Times,* had completed the mobilization of its front pages. The kings of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark interrupted tennis and tea. The President of the United States, while denying any diplomatic intention, addressed a personal message to President Kalinin, of the USSR. Still the Red Army made no move. After holding the Sulzberger line for three full days, the press made a cautious retreat, fully covering its rear. Dispatches made perfectly clear that no one knows just what the Russians said to the Finnish ministers. The ministers themselves were perfectly pleased with their initial discussions and expressed confidence that satisfactory solutions would be achieved.

It seems reasonably certain that Finland will lease to the Soviet Union several small islands outside of Leningrad, something which they refused to do earlier in the year. As for bases on the Aland islands, or their neutralization, nothing is known. Nor is there any way of telling until definitive statements are made of the extent and content of Soviet-Finnish discussions.

One slant on the matter, which places the editors of the New York *Times* in objective alliance with the Nazis, comes from G. E. R. Gedye, *Times* Moscow correspondent, on October 14:

> This correspondent has ample evidence as to how the Nazis are now trying to terrify the Scandinavian powers with the Bolshevist bogy, since Russia has failed so far to give them more valuable help than a couple of articles in *Pravda.* A particularly flagrant example of these tactics is the German broadcast suggestion that Russia has demanded to be allowed to influence the fate of the Aland islands, with suggestions that she has proposed the surrender of these vital possessions by Finland. This correspondent is able to assert positively that there is no word of truth in the German suggestions.

Sulzberger's Dream Life

SOMEBODY could make a good livelihood publishing a correction sheet for the New York *Times.* Consider last week: practically single-handed the *Times* started a couple more wars: one between the Soviet Union and Finland, and the second between Turkey and—guess who. On three occasions the *Times* called off negotiations between Moscow and Ankara; as far as the Finns are concerned, the *Times* had Finland (the only country that paid its war debts) ready to tear into the Russian Bear any given moment. It didn't matter that the Finns explicitly announced several times they were satisfied with the way negotiations were proceeding—the *Times* wasn't satisfied. Furthermore, on the question of the evacuation of Germans from the Baltic states: this process is carried through purely upon the initiative of the German government with the Baltics. The Soviet news agency found it necessary to point out that a "slanderous version is being spread about the treaties [the mutual assistance pacts concluded between the USSR and the Baltic states] bringing in train the Sovietization of Estonia and Latvia, despite the fact that in these treaties non-intervention in domestic life and respect for state social and economic structure of the contracting parties is clearly stressed." Tass named the New York *Times,* specifically, as one of the organs spreading the calumny.

To that individual who wants to publish the correction sheet for the *Times* (a hefty job) add the following just for last week: the spurious photograph of the *Bremen* in Murmansk; the President's repudiation of the *Times* headline that the United States was ignoring German mediation pleas. Stephen T. Early, the White House secretary, had to reiterate emphatically that no plea of mediation from the German government lies before F.D.R.

And, *horribile dictu,* even old Harvard had to pen the *Times* editors a stinging rebuke for misrepresenting what happened on the campus concerning those Young Communist leaflets. It appeared John Harvard did not burn them after all, but the *Times* certainly threw them in the furnace. If old Freud were not dead and gone he might be persuaded to say a few things about wishful thinking and the strange dream life of Mr. Sulzberger.

Business Looks South

BIG business muses fondly upon the possibilities of extending American interests and trade in South America at the expense of both belligerents in the European war. The National Foreign Trade Council, meeting in New York last week, made it perfectly plain that leading American export and import firms anticipate solving some of the problems of an ailing economy by expansion below the Rio Grande. Such considerations occupied that public servant, Sumner Welles, at the Pan-American "neutrality" conference. Similar questions will come to the fore at the session of Pan-American economic experts, assembling in Washington on November 15.

The big problem is credit. American citizens still remember the disastrous experiences with South American loan flotations in the twenties. Chances for similar financial hocus pocus are more remote today. Nevertheless, several important proposals came forth last week from high authorities in the administration. Jesse Jones, federal loan administrator, suggested that private companies be formed to finance South American trade, with part of their funds to come from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, thus sidestepping legal limits to the foreign lending which the RFC, as such, is allowed. By far the most dramatic suggestion came after a White House conference of government officials.

It is proposed that American "free" gold reserves be used as a credit basis for the facili-

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tation of trade and industrial expansion in South America. Over $17,000,000,000 is salted away in government gold stocks, but Treasury certificates have already been issued against them. There is immediately available, however, $1,800,000,000 of the inactive portion of the Stabilization Fund, and $142,000,000 representing the balance of Treasury profits when the dollar was devalued. Credit issued against such sums would be impressive, compared with the half-billion dollars which was refused to the Export-Import Bank at the last session of Congress.

Such financing would undoubtedly be a boon to American business. But the American worker may well ask why his government becomes so generous when big business knocks at the door, why technicalities may be overlooked when big business stands to gain, while arms and airplane orders, for example, are being ladled out with no governmental insistence upon the enforcement of the Wagner act or the wages-and-hours law.

Likewise, Americans may well ask what safeguards will be established against the economic domination of the South American countries, the recrudescence of a parasitic imperialism, which would suppress industrialization and the existing democracy among our "good neighbors."

Detroit—Bright Spot

WITH the domestic skies overcast, it is a particular pleasure to call attention to a bright spot—the Detroit primaries last week. At last it looks as if the long fight for progress in what was formerly the private fief of General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford is about to be crowned with success. Council President Edward Jeffries, Jr., endorsed by Labor's Non-Partisan League, ran away with the primary contest, polling 116,697 votes, while the Republican wheelhorse, Mayor Reading, seeking reelection, secured a mere 48,473. In addition, seven of the candidates for City Council endorsed by Labor's Non-Partisan League were among the eighteen who will fight it out for the nine Council seats on November 7. With a single exception, all these candidates were likewise endorsed by the Wayne County Central Labor Council of the AFL.

Dearborn, capital of the Ford empire, also provided good news. There Clarence Doyle, anti-Ford incumbent councilman, who was endorsed by the CIO and Labor's Non-Partisan League, led the balloting.

All of which indicates that those who predicted a continued turn to the right after last November's election may have been counting reaction's chickens before they were hatched. The victory in Detroit is particularly encouraging in view of the heartbreaking defeats that the progressive forces have suffered there in recent years. The progressive movement in Detroit has come of age and eliminated the weaknesses that were partly responsible for the defeat of its ticket in 1938. And as Detroit goes in 1939, Michigan may well go in 1940. The national connotations are obvious.

Tammany's Trick

LAST week, the four Communist candidates for the New York City Council were ruled off the ballot by the New York Board of Elections. By a vote of three to one, the Tammany-controlled board delivered this blow on the pretext that those notarizing the Communist petitions had not stated their election and assembly districts on the petitions. The number of petitioners, incidentally, was five times the amount necessary by law.

No notice was given to the Communist Party in taking this action. However, the four councilmanic candidates announced their intention of fighting the discrimination to the last ditch. Show-cause orders have been requested from the Supreme Courts of the four counties in which Amter, Begun, Caccione, and Crosbie are running. Appeal will be made to the highest courts if these fail.

The 100,000-plus votes that Israel Amter received last year when running for councilman at large, and Peter Caccione's running within a few dozen votes of election to the City Council two years ago, undoubtedly caused the Tammany panic. The Tiger's stripes haven't changed since the days of Tweed.

This action, of course, is a signal of what will undoubtedly be tried all over America as the plight of reaction becomes desperate and the war plotters begin to stifle all opposition to their railroading of the country into the holocaust in Europe. The opening gun of every attack upon the peace and liberty of the people always starts with an illegal attack upon the Communists. New Yorkers have just found that out.

Anti-Negro Terror

PROTESTS of NEW MASSES readers over the conditions of anti-Negro terror and police discrimination described in the article "Judge Lynch in New York," in our August 15 issue, resulted last week in the launching of an investigation by the New York Police Department. Police officials called at the home of the writer, Ralph Ellison, where they requested and received substantiation for facts given in the article and were directed to the offices of the Greater New York Committee for Employment, where detailed information concerning the Washington Heights situation is to be obtained.

The officials informed the writer that every effort was being made to put a stop to these conditions and to apprehend those policemen guilty of Negro discrimination and neglect of duty. At the same time the officials expressed their willingness to cooperate with all those forces interested in ridding the community of its mob atmosphere. This investigation by the Police Department carries a step further the action begun in August when, following protest from Harlem and Washington Heights citizens' committees, policing of the trouble area was strengthened and policemen from other precincts, including some Negroes, were brought in. To ensure that this much-needed investigation does not bog down for lack of information, the Greater New York Coordinating Committee for Employment has asked Commissioner Valentine for a conference at which the Washington Heights situation might be discussed.

Firing the Teacher

WHEN the New York City schools opened last month, 826 teachers and other educators were dropped from the rolls in an attack upon educational facilities sponsored by the Board of Education, the members of which seem to care more for saving a dollar for the city's bankers than for the future of the city's children.

This week, 155 more teachers were let go and next week 138 elementary classes will be consolidated and the pupils shifted elsewhere. These economies were effected among that most important class, the elementary school teachers; they fell upon the substitutes now teaching such classes at a salary of $1,140 per year. No new teaching appointments will be made this year.

Such an attack upon the primary education of a great city under the smokescreen of economy reveals the extent of the reactionary drive against all culture as war begins to loom on the horizon. New York schools, already overcrowded and inadequate, are to be packed still more so that more money may be available for armaments.

The Roosevelt Medals

THE Roosevelt Medals have this year been awarded to Maj. Gen. Frank R. McCoy, Dr. George Washington Carver, and Carl Sandburg. The latter choices represent the best medal-giving in a long time. Dr. Carver is the greatest agricultural scientist alive today, the peer of Burbank and Michurin, enduring figure in the scientific advance of mankind. The honor is doubly praiseworthy because Dr. Carver is a Negro, born in slavery and traded in his youth for a race horse. The Roosevelt citation says that "out of the peanut he has made 285 useful products, ranging from face powder and cheese to axle grease and oils used in the treatment of infantile paralysis. He has transformed the substance of the sweet potato into 118 different products, including flour, starch, library paste, printer's ink, lard, and rubber compound."

Mr. Sandburg's award was made for his biography of Lincoln, in which "he has employed the imagination of one of the most arresting poets of his generation to recreate the personality of Abraham Lincoln and the life of the region and the period in which he grew to maturity and to national stature."

In these two men, representing the democratic science and culture of America, we are reminded of a tradition that must be defended against reaction as well as honored with medals.

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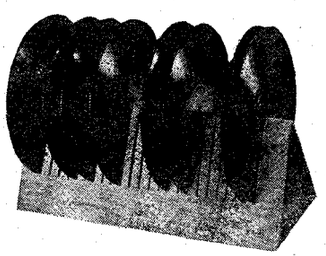

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Our Cultural Affinities

A reminder that false theories of racism and "linguistic ties" served as a smokescreen to get us into the World War.

IF THE imperialist war continues, we are bound to hear a great deal about the "cultural affinity" between America and Britain. Several columnists and university presidents have already begun to harp on a theme which was the stock-in-trade of Allied propagandists in the last war. In 1914, appeals to an alleged spiritual bond based on a common language rang in our ears. The echo today is deafening. We do not as yet know who the contemporary equivalent of Sir Gilbert Parker will be. But we may be sure that his successor as policeman of the intelligentsia will borrow heavily from Sir Gilbert's successful tactics.

In the last war we were constantly asked to remember our "indebtedness" to an entity described as Anglo-Saxon culture. We were not, to be sure, reminded of our traditional pride in our capacity to assimilate the best in *world* culture. Nor were we reminded of the profound contempt which British litterateurs poured on American culture before the outbreak of war. Year after year, visiting lecturers had informed us that we were a nation which had not yet emerged, culturally, from the primeval slime. From Mrs. Trollope on, we were treated to a steady stream of what Lowell pleasantly described as condescension. But when the war broke out, a number of British writers, including Sir James Barrie, were hurriedly dispatched to make contact with our campuses and literary circles. We were fine fellows who were nursed by the same Muse. As George Louis Beer wrote in the *New Republic* of Nov. 20, 1915, we were a branch of the "politically separated but culturally united English-speaking race."

Indeed, we heard a great deal about the "English-speaking race." The most suspect word in Anglo-American top circles was "hyphen." As time went on, "hyphen-Americans" were treated as the scum of the earth. The melting pot was supposed to have produced pure Anglo-Saxons. Anybody who held on to worthwhile elements in his national past, whether German, French, Russian, or Swedish, was a traitor to the fictitious "race" of English-speaking peoples. The whole concept was un-American from start to finish. A nation that had prided itself on the diversity of peoples which inhabited it was now asked to repudiate all racial slackers.

Henry James clambered out of his ivory tower to champion the racists. He was, as C. Hartley Grattan writes, "in agitated correspondence" with pro-Ally Americans when the war broke out. In a letter to the London *Daily News,* he wrote: "Personally I feel so strongly on everything that the war has brought into question for *the Anglo-Saxon peoples* that humorous detachment or any other thinness or tepidity of mind on the subject affects me as vulgar impiety, not to say rank blasphemy; *our whole race question became for me a sublimely conscious thing* from the moment Germany flung at us all her explanations of her pounce upon Belgium for massacre and ravage. . . ." (My italics—S. S.) This was written some time before America's entrance into the war with the deliberate intention of involving us. To get us into a war for bloody spoils was not "vulgar impiety," or "rank blasphemy." James was *ashamed* of America for its failure to appreciate the "racial" debt. Frantically he appealed to Prime Minister Asquith for British citizenship. His attachment to the Anglo-Saxon cause, he wrote, is "finally and completely irresistible. It brooks at least no inward denial whatever. I can only testify by laying at her feet my explicit, my material and spiritual allegiance. . . ."

Henry James could say all this with an aristocratic candor. Some of those who are today flirting with the new racism are less explicit. Their propaganda is none the less dangerous. The very people who are howling down the "agents of foreign governments" are themselves, whether consciously or unconsciously—the objective effect is the same—

Ad Reinhardt

turning into warmongering agents of the British Ministry of Information.

The extent to which this sort of thinking can go is shockingly revealed in the correspondence of our wartime ambassador to London, Walter Hines Page. In a letter to Edwin A. Alderman, president of the University of Virginia, Page wrote that "As the world stands, the United States and Great Britain must work together and stand together to keep the predatory nations in order." This, be it remembered, is dated June 22, 1916, at a time when the American people were strongly registering their desire for neutrality. The letterhead carries the imprimatur of the Embassy of the USA, London. Page goes on to speak bitterly of Wilson's "bastard children of neutrality." But this is only the beginning. As the Anglophile warms up, he declares (and I use his heated italics): *"The* thing, the *only* thing is—a perfect understanding between the English-speaking peoples. That's necessary, and that's all that's necessary. . . . I frankly tell my friends here . . . that we Americans have got to . . . hang our Irish agitators and shoot our hyphenates and bring up our children with reverence for English history and in the awe of English literature. This is the only job now in the world worth the whole zeal and energy of all first-class, thoroughbred English-speaking men." Page continues: *"We* must lead. We are natural leaders. The English must be driven to lead. Item: We must get their lads into our universities, ours into theirs." The Rhodes scholars are not enough; they are only "a little driblet."

So there we have it, the whole messy truth. We must hang our *Irish* agitators; shoot our *hyphenates*. They are not sufficiently endowed with the qualities of the racial "thoroughbred." And we must train our children not in American history and ideals, not in world history and ideals, but in English history and "in the awe of" English literature! This is an American ambassador speaking in the summer of 1916 to an American university president.

Our dreadful experiences in the past make me particularly sensitive to any signs of loose thinking by the intellectuals of our own day. When they begin speaking of their "cultural affinities" with England, I know that they have only begun to travel a path that leads right down to the hell of war. I know that they are either ignoring or misreading the plain lessons of history—all too recent history. They are harking back to a colonial view of America that our major writers have been breaking down for a century. When they talk of our common language, I wonder

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if they are thinking of India, of Egypt, of South Africa, of China. Have these ceased to exist because at one time or another their imperialist overlords spoke the English tongue? I wonder if they remember our past experiences with our cherished linguistic brothers of the British ruling class. The Civil War, for example, of which Lowell wrote lines dedicated to Great Britain ("Jonathan to John"):

> You wonder why we're hot, John?
> Your mark was on the guns,
> The *neutral* guns that shot, John,
> Our brothers and our sons.

These lines will be appreciated by the people of Spain, of China, of Czechoslovakia, of Poland, of India, of South Africa, of all the lands on which the sun never sets. To the extent that a common language has brought us close to the masses of English people we may be grateful. Our problem is to *overcome* not to *intensify* whatever language obstacles may separate us from the peoples of other countries.

I yield to none in my devotion to the truly liberating values of English literature. For ten years I have taught American university students to understand and appreciate the great works of England's poets, novelists, dramatists, and essayists. But it is the voice of Shelley which I have identified as the voice of the English people, not the voice of Kipling. I have seen the World War through the eyes of Wilfrid Owen, not through those of Lord Beaverbrook. My affinity has been with those of her writers who spoke for the people of England and mankind, not for Joseph and Neville Chamberlain. If we are going to talk about affinities, let us keep the record straight.

An ominous note is struck by Henry Seidel Canby in the current issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. His editorial, "Like Speech, Like Mind," shows the way the wind is blowing in some quarters. It is frightening. For Canby develops the thesis that in the war period we must consolidate our cultural contacts with the English-speaking peoples of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. We must compensate for the cultural isolation which the war will produce by knitting our relationships with those who speak our language. The idea is that we have "common carriers" of culture. We have the same tongues; inevitably, therefore, we have the same minds. This is a truly amazing doctrine, despite its superficial plausibility. In the American Revolution our minds were much better attuned to those of France, I suspect, than to those of Britain. Our cultural ties, in any profound sense, are much closer to Mexico than to New Zealand. Our inheritance of German science, Russian literature, and French political theory is in peril. Instead of meeting that peril by consolidating our cultural ties with all valid cultural elements, no matter where, Mr. Canby falls back on what amounts to James' spurious racism.

For the danger of "cultural isolationism" is right here in America. In the last war we persecuted teachers of the German language, thus isolating *ourselves* from a rich culture. The number of American universities that teach Russian may be counted on one hand. What are we doing to correct that sort of cultural isolation? And now Mr. Eugene Ormandy points out that there have been whispered complaints against his all-Russian program, which is to open the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra's New York season. Does not this make a mockery of all the nonsense about the "English-speaking peoples"? Is there a Russian-speaking music and a French-speaking music and an English-speaking music? To answer the question is to get to the point of the whole business: namely, that the new racism, like Hitler's obnoxious racism, has a selfish political motivation. It is supported neither by common sense nor history. Its intent is to stir up partisan passions and war hysteria. The answer to that challenge, Mr. Canby, is not a consolidation of our contacts with Australia and New Zealand, desirable as that may be, but a frontal attack on all forces seeking to divide the world into racial and language groups. Our job as writers is to fight for cultural values everywhere, now more than ever. Our job is to keep America from a retreat to colonialism and provincialism.

"Do not be deceived," John Reed wrote in the last war, "by talk about democracy and liberty. This is not a crusade against militarism but a scramble for spoils. It is not our war." Let us not, for heaven's sake, encourage the present scramble for spoils by any talk about "cultural affinities" and "racial allegiances." Let us not allow a similarity of language to serve as a smokescreen for involving America in a mad and suicidal war.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Russia Regained

OVER THE DIVIDE, *by Victor A. Yakhontoff. Coward, McCann. $3.*

NEW MASSES readers know Victor Yakhontoff well. He was that member of the czarist General Staff, general of the Russian armies and participant in the provisional government who came forward after the October Revolution to say: "Great, good things are being done in my old homeland by the Russian workers and peasants. I have seen them and found them good." This is his story, in his own words, "an impersonal record of personal experiences." It is the story of early education in the czarist military schools, attempts to understand the significance of the revolutionary events in 1905, long years in the Far East studying Japanese, directing translation for the czarist Military Intelligence. Then, service in the disasters of the World War, commissions to represent the czar among the Allies, after which came the impact of revolution, the ineptitude of the politicians, the intrigue of foreign agents on Russian soil, the rough, instinctive decision of the Bolshevik workers and soldiers to reestablish sovereignty over their own destinies. There is much valuable documentation here of the Allied intervention, the second stage, as it were, of the Brest-Litovsk offensive against the young socialist republic. The details are all the more interesting today when, in the past eight weeks, the epoch of Brest-Litovsk has come to a close, and with it the prospect of Allied intervention made more difficult. Perhaps, also, the most moving aspect of General Yakhontoff's story is his concept of patriotism, which animated him almost alone among members of his class, to overcome the conditioning of their personal histories and embrace their true "motherland," the new Russia.

The most recent years are foreshortened. But the breakdown of the old world, the inception of the new are dramatized with an objective humor and a memorable sympathy.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

Norris of Nebraska

DEMOCRACY' NORRIS, *by Alfred Lief. Stackpole Sons. $3.50.*

THIS is the fullest record yet written of the man who has licked the power trust in this country as much as any one person can—whom Roosevelt has called "one of the greatest of all Americans"—whom his enemies have described as a "renegade, demagogue, traitor," and, once anyway, "skunk." It is a long record, covering, among other things, thirty-six years in Congress, and Mr. Lief presents it thoroughly. There are the historic battles with Henry Ford and the power trust, the fight for TVA, the lame duck amendment, and the anti-injunction law; against America's entry into the World War, and a score of crusades not so well known. Most of them were waged in the black twenties of Harding corruption, Coolidge cynicism, Hoover callousness. Victory, or partial victory, came with the New Deal, and it would be hard to say just how much Norris and his little band of insurgent followers contributed toward making that New Deal possible.

And yet, as the biographer makes plain, Norris never had very much heart for public life or any taste for fights. An essentially gentle person, genuinely modest, he sometimes became discouraged not only about the future of democracy but about his own abilities. Less than a year ago he worried: "I do not want to end my public life by making a mistake at its very close, in the direction of confusion, dictatorship, destruction. . . . In my old age, have my eyes of wisdom, if I possessed any, become dimmed and blurred? Am I to lose my ability even to do what is right? . . ." More than once in his career he would have retired if his constituents had permitted him to.

Mr. Lief has told his story too much in terms of political figures and congressional maneuvers. While Norris' qualities of incorruptibility and persistence come through, a far more understanding portrait of him could have been drawn against a background of economic forces and masses of people. It might also have helped explain how the Nebraskan, whose heroic "war against war" in 1917 provides the one really exciting chapter in this rather plodding biography, could make the

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incredible error today of supporting Chamberlain's and Daladier's "democratic" aims and bracketing Stalin with Hitler—how this man who, twenty-two years ago, dared the jingo hysteria to say, "We are going into war upon the command of gold. . . . I feel that we are about to put the dollar sign upon the American flag," can have failed so far to recognize the imperialist nature of the present European conflict.

BARBARA GILES.

British Propaganda

PROPAGANDA FOR WAR, *by H. C. Peterson. University of Oklahoma Press. $3.*

THE Dies committee, which supposedly sniffs anything Red as eagerly as a bloodhound sniffs a fresh trail, repeatedly has been urged to get on the scent of the "Reddest" influence in American affairs, which is British propaganda. But of course the gentleman from Texas and his buddies are too single-minded for any such diversion. The American public will get no help from them in picking up the trail in today's affairs of that influence which students of Jefferson and the early days of the republic know is endemic in this country. Revelations of the methods and scope of British propaganda are always ex post facto; but we learn from history.

Professor Peterson's book is a study of British propaganda in America during the years 1914-18. There was plenty of German propaganda during those years also, but the British variety far outstripped it, and moreover it was the British variety that succeeded; which makes our author's almost exclusive concern with British methods a correct historical choice. This book takes its place with Walter Millis' and the few others already published which between them begin to piece together an intelligible account of how the United States was inveigled, pushed, and snared into the first imperialist world war.

Peterson's account is by no means exhaustive, but it fills in essential parts of the picture. As long ago as 1918 Sir Gilbert Parker complacently confessed the main outlines of the propaganda in America which he directed from Wellington House. But Professor Peterson has dug up from dusty corners of the British Museum the files of a series of weekly reports made by Wellington House to the British Cabinet, containing details never intended for innocent American eyes. This book also solves the riddle of Woodrow Wilson's efforts to win the support of congressional leaders for American intervention in the war in January and February 1916. A. M. Arnett, biographer of Claude Kitchin, wartime Democratic leader in the House of Representatives, some years ago revealed that Wilson had put his war plans up to Kitchin, Champ Clark, and Senator Stone. But the present reviewer learned at that time, and within forty-eight hours of its occurrence, of a conference which included (besides the President) Senators Stone and Kern and

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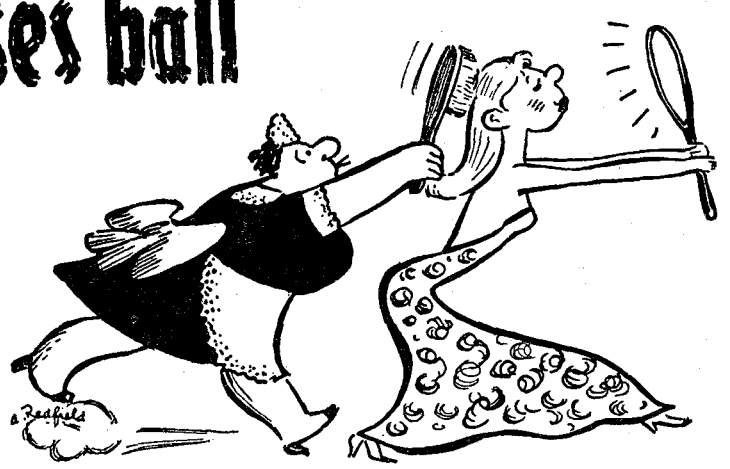

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Representative Flood. Peterson makes it clear that there were two conferences, perhaps more. He correctly points out that Wilson's belligerent urgency was made fruitless by the introduction, in February 1916, of the Gore resolution in the Senate and the McLemore resolution in the House.

Acute analyses of the effect of American banking loans to Britain and France and American credits on munitions purchases by the same empires on the growth of pro-war propaganda make this book one of the most timely and important that could be studied in these days when the same forces are busy with the same devices in the effort to involve the might, men, and money of America once more in a European imperialistic war. This book should be required reading particularly for the generation that has grown up since 1918. Perhaps if they see how the propaganda wheels go round, they will refuse to mount the tumbrils that are ready to rush them to death on distant battlefields for no American cause, for no democratic cause, but to ensure profits for bankers and munitions makers and to save once more the good old British empire.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Dynamic of Decay

THE REVOLUTION OF NIHILISM, *by Herman Rauschning. Alliance Book Corp. $3.*

THIS is the book which Dorothy Thompson has taken to her bosom. It is now the third best-seller on the non-fiction lists. Neither of these phenomena in itself minimizes the book's importance. An important, indeed a basic, book it is. But not so much for the conclusions of the author, who, as a monarchist, continually regrets that combination of monarchists, conservatives, and National Socialists which made possible Hitler's parliamentary dictatorship. The importance of this work, overlooking its often difficult style and redundancy, lies in its merciless exposure of the degenerate dynamic which impels the Nazi regime.

Examining Nazi policy toward their allies, toward youth, education, morality, economics, and foreign affairs, Rauschning penetrates into its utter nihilism, its self-perpetuating, continually self-defeating, permanent lust for unproductive action, propelling the Nazis toward greater and greater risks for ever higher stakes, with ever narrowing chances of even temporary success. The end must be collapse and catastrophe, as Rauschning fears.

But the two important conclusions (hardly to be expected from the author himself) are missing. First, there is nothing intrinsically German in the phenomenal death agony of German capitalism. It is but the ultima toward which the policies of every capitalist country must lead. Unless, second, a force from within successfully resists the course of decay, and succeeds in the establishment on the levels of a higher civilization the rule of a rational ethic, a liberated science, a socialist law.

J. S.

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S I G H T S A N D S O U N D S

A New Garfield

"Dust Be My Destiny" . . . A befuddled war newsreel at the Cameo . . . A biographical sketch of a movie producer . . . Boris Shchukin dies.

JOHN GARFIELD'S new picture, *Dust Be My Destiny,* has been written by one of Warner Bros.' most effective screen-writers, Robert Rosson, author of *They Won't Forget.* It is an exciting story of a wronged and beaten youth whose only code is always to keep on the run. After he is innocently implicated in the death of a prison farm boss, he runs with the boss' daughter, Priscilla Lane. The familiar pattern that follows—the endless flight, fear, and insecurity—is filled in with several fine incidents, including a wedding on a movie theater stage. But the plot dilemma of all such underdog studies confronts the author soon enough. He must get Joe Bell out of his difficulties without carrying out the logic of his play. Everything in the previous situation has established that the wrongs done to Joe Bell are the wrongs of the social system against hundreds of thousands of Joe Bells. Now this particular Joe Bell must be delivered and the others forgotten. Suddenly Joe has a news photographer's camera (where did he get it?) and he happens to photograph some shots of a bank robbery. (Where did this homeless youth learn photography?) The photographs make him famous and lead the police to him. This is pure Horatio Alger with the bank robbery substituted for the banker's daughter and the runaway carriage. In the trial Mr. Rosson comes back again to his thesis that class justice rules the case of Joe Bell. The jury is properly impressed and Joe is free.

With the exception of the bank robbery gimmick, *Dust Be My Destiny* is a forthright attack on things as they are. John Garfield's acting is bold and graphic, proving again that he is one of the screen's best recruits in years. Priscilla Lane, on a simpler level, is almost believable in an incredible role.

Dust Be My Destiny is a picture far above average.

WAR DOCUMENTARY

The Cameo's *Why this War* is a hodge-podge of several documentary films, interwoven in a most haphazard way, and stressing the imperialist nature of the present European war and America's desire to keep out. That, at least, is the purport of one of the member reels. Another, made in England, is the juiciest Allied propaganda I have seen yet. Between the anti-imperialist and pro-British conflict, as it scuttles back and forth, the onlooker gets a jumbled impression. The way I dope out the reactionary propaganda in America right now, there is one principal consideration: to establish a bias in favor of French and English imperialism so that later on the switch to let's-get-in will be so much the easier. *Why this War* satisfies the specifications, except for its anti-imperialist strain.

Also I think it is time war documentaries dispense with the bulk of stock shots from *All Quiet on the Western Front,* the neat explosion of miniature sets, and the use of fictional fighting to bridge every gap in the script. The commentator on the English footage fairly drips with rah-rah for the brave Tommies. One shot from the Battle of Jutland illustrates the spurious nature of his comment. The screen presents the celebrated and horrifying shot of a German battleship turning turtle while hundreds of little men run with the spin like lumberjacks on a log. The hull is black with them as she finally goes down. The shot is taken from an English vessel not more than two hundred yards away, and other Royal Navy craft lie nearby. The commentator piously remarks that no lifeboats were lowered for them because a Zeppelin flying overhead prevented it! Then a phony shot of a miniature Zeppelin flying over a miniature cruiser.

SHCHUKIN DIES

Boris V. Shchukin, to whom fell the honor of portraying Lenin on the Soviet stage and screen, is dead. In 1937 he first played Lenin in the Vakhtangov Theater production, *The Man with the Rifle,* which later became the movie shown here as *The Man with the Gun.* He won the Order of Lenin and the title of Peoples Artist of the USSR for his work in the title roles of *Lenin in October* and *Lenin in 1918.* Shchukin has been buried near Stanislavsky, with whom he rightfully belongs as one of the founders of socialist theater art. His revolutionary contribution to acting technique consists of his mastery of realism, a realism only half approached on the bourgeois stage. He dared to submit himself to portraying a towering historical figure, keeping Lenin in proportion as a man and as a political event. His acting had no trickery and underneath its literal surface Shchukin revealed a joyful understanding of Lenin. The late Peoples Artist was only forty-five years old when death came. In his youth he was an iron molder, a fitter, and locomotive driver. After the kind of dramatic opportunity that can come only under socialism—in the railroad club's dramatic circle—he went on to the Vakhtangov Dramatic Studio and won the original Lenin role in the Vakhtangov Theater. He leaves the best remembrance: thousands of Soviet Theater artists who will go on to triumphs confident in his inspiration.

JOHN GARFIELD, *who appears in "Dust Be My Destiny," now playing at the Strand in Manhattan.*

BIOGRAPHY

If this prose seems a little numb this week lay it to an amazing human document I have before me on my desk, entitled *Max Fleischer Autobiography.* Mr. Fleischer is the producer of animated cartoons who ran his sweatshop off to Florida when the Cartoonists Guild struck his plant several years ago. Mr. Fleischer is now producing *Gulliver's Travels,* in which he says we will find "political satire, nevertheless entirely free of propaganda," and has thought it necessary to make known the mimeographed facts of his life.

Married when I was twenty-one to a Miss Ethel Gold. . . . Hobbies: bowling. My average is about 165 which is very low for me. I should bowl better than that. I have bowled as high as 289, eleven points below a perfect score. That was an accident, I guess. I have been bowling for about eighteen years. That's why I'm ashamed of my average score. I was at one time near the top of our studio bowling club but now I'm near the bottom. That's the only sport I engage in. . . .

I read a lot in small patches. I don't read through a whole book. I read by the chapter system. I can skip a whole chapter and then if I miss something I can go back and find out what I need. It saves me a lot of time. I can read a four hour book in less than an hour. . . .

Most of my social life is the minutes I grab from business. . . .

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JAMES DUGAN.

"Clinton Street"

The East Side of New York as portrayed by the Artef Players.

THE saying goes, about Pall Mall, that it is less a street than a concept. Those who have walked through it, and especially those who ever have entered its aristocratic clubs, will understand. England has been ruled from there for a long time, and Pall Mall reflects class rule. No member of the Carlton Club would think of comparing it with Clinton Street in the East Side of New York. The smells, colors, cries, "types," and peculiar "Americanization" would break his heart. So much the better. Clinton Street is also more than a street because it is a symbol. It is more than the mere accumulation of pushcarts, peddlers, narrow pavements, deadly brown firetraps, immigrant tragedies and rebellions. It is the expression of a type of life.

A good deal of this comes through in the Artef Players' new production. Some of the scenes are so rich that they achieve genuine folk quality. In almost every case, they are the collective scenes where individuals count less than the street itself. In some cases the players add a touch of caricature which does no harm at all. There is a little comic figure done to perfection by Louis Freilich, who needs only to make the slightest movement with his cheeks to bring on a kind of wistful laughter in the Chaplin tradition. He did not come on frequently enough for me. In fact, the best portions of the play seem to come when Clinton Street looks at itself with a sort of ironic lightness, and there are many such moments throughout the evening.

But the creation of sustained atmosphere, without a substantial plot, is extremely difficult. A successful bit may be followed by a dull one, so that the play as a whole is uneven and disjointed. The mere locale will not be enough to bind them all together unless most of the play is on the same artistic level. This is exactly what *Clinton Street* lacks. There is no continuous plot and almost no strong idea, except the general notion of suffering and frustration. The two strongest themes belong to the *Dead End* and *The Gentle People* school—the gangster son and the dissatisfied daughter. At the end of the play, a narrator, who seems to have no useful function throughout, almost suggests the plot which the play itself fails to produce.

Clinton Street was adapted by Louis Miller from the novel by Chaver Paver. The play would suggest that the book rested mainly on brilliantly told incidents and local color.

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GOINGS ON

MR. BENJAMIN J. DAVIS, attorney for Angelo Herndon, will speak Friday, October 20, 8 P.M. sharp, at Workers School, 35 East 12th Street, Room 205, on the subject: "EQUAL RIGHTS FOR NEGROES UNDER THE LAW—WHAT PROGRESS?" Admission 25 cents.

ALFRED GOLDSTEIN, popular political analyst, discusses the week's news, Sunday, October 22, 8:30 P.M. Auspices Workers School, 35 East 12 Street, second floor. Admission 20 cents.

Reserve Friday evening, October 27th, for MIDTOWNERS Pre-Hallowe'en shindig. Dancing, Floorshow, Refreshments. Admission 50c. MIDTOWN CENTER, 846 7th Avenue (at 54th Street).

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The color was certainly transferred to the stage but it might have been wiser to develop one of the incidents into an embracing plot for the specific purposes of the drama. Otherwise, the play would require greater consistency and brilliance of style. Lem Ward's direction of the Clinton Street scenes and the engagement party do have much of that consistency and brilliance. Only when the street becomes secondary to its people does the level fall. The Artef Players have done as much as they could with what they had, and there is enough joy in the characters of the street to make an evening at the Mercury a matter of course for those who love the theater.

T. D.

Light Broadway Fare

"Skylark," with Gertrude Lawrence, and "The Straw Hat Revue."

IT WOULD be difficult for almost anyone to be more superficial about a potentially valid situation than Samson Raphaelson has been in his latest, *Skylark,* at the Morosco (N. Y.). It is a comedy, certainly, but so slight that it evaporates before your very eyes. It would evaporate completely, leaving only a faint odor of violets, were it not for Miss Gertrude Lawrence, whose personal charm and ingenious theatrical technique force you to remember it until the final curtain.

As the neglected wife of an advertising man who loves promoting "Baby Malt" more than he loves his wife, Miss Lawrence carries over to the "dramatic stage" those graces which have made her internationally famous on the musical comedy level. She can throw away her lines more delightfully than almost anyone you can think of; she is personally lovely; she bobs, flounces, bounces, and pirouettes endlessly, and all but goes into her dance. She is charming. Which is more than can be said for *Skylark.*

THE STRAW HAT REVUE

If you are particularly flush, a visit to *The Straw Hat Revue* at the Ambassador will provide an evening of easy entertainment rather on the thin side. The sketches, with few exceptions, do not give the energetic cast headed by Danny Kaye and Imogene Coca much to sink their teeth into, and the music is more easily forgotten than most such scores.

Miss Coca is a delightful clown; Mr. Kaye an engaging comic; the talented Dorothy Bird is not given enough to do, but there is an air of youthful enthusiasm about the entire production that is rarely found in the more professional antics of Broadway. Mention should be made of two satirical dancers amazingly named Meta Mati and Otto Hari; an ingenuous surrealist dance (?) by Lilli Sandan, a well-executed monologue by Marjorie Moffett, and a fine bit of fooling by Maude Davis.

A. B.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933.

Of NEW MASSES, published weekly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1939.

State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Carl A. Bristel, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the New Masses, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

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2. That the owner is: Weekly Masses Co., Inc., 461 Fourth Avenue, N. Y. C.; Carl A. Bristel, 461 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

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Martha Fisher, Notary Public.

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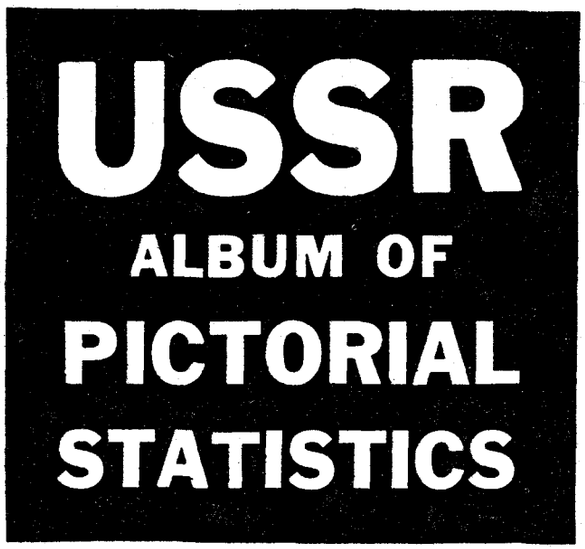

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